



ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
San Antonio, Texas

Presented by Mrs. Marie O'Neil

Is

Miss Marie O'Neil

May God bless you

J. H. Munroe, Jr.

Christina 1916



+ C. J. Eugenius
Episcopus Massiliensis

SKETCHES OF THE LIFE

OF

MGR. DE MAZENOD

(1782-1861)

BISHOP OF MARSEILLES

AND

FOUNDER OF THE OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE

WITH A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE

OBLATES' LABOURS IN HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS

BY THE

VERY REV. ROBERT COOKE, O.M.I.

NEW EDITION, REVISED AND ABRIDGED BY

REV. THOMAS DAWSON, O.M.I.

Dublin

DOLLARD, LIMITED, PRINTINGHOUSE, WELLINGTON QUAY

1914

Imprimatur

✠ AUG. DONTENWILL, O.M.I.

Archiep. Ptolemaïdensis

Superior Generalis

Habil Obstat

FRANCISCUS J. WALL

Censor. Theol. Deput.

Imprimi Potest

✠ GULIELMUS

Archiep. Dublinensis

Hiberniae Primas

Dublino, die 3 Februarii 1914

921
M476

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE - - - - -	v
I. CHILDHOOD : 1782-91 - - - - -	1
II. EXILE : NICE AND TURIN : 1791-4 - - - - -	4
III. EXILE : VENICE : 1794-7 - - - - -	8
IV. EXILE : NAPLES—PALERMO : 1798-1802 - - - - -	16
V. AGAIN AT AIX : 1802-8 - - - - -	22
VI. ST. SULPICE : 1808-11 - - - - -	24
VII. "THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR" : 1811-16 - - - - -	28
VIII. AIMING AT PERFECTION : 1816-18 - - - - -	37
IX. OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE : 1818-26 - - - - -	45
X. BISHOP OF MARSEILLES : 1837 - - - - -	62
XI. SAGUENAY, OTTAWA, LABRADOR, AND THE NORTH- WEST : 1841-60 - - - - -	65
XII. A NEW BISHOP IN THE NORTH-WEST - - - - -	91
XIII. RETURNING SOUTH TO ST. ALBERT - - - - -	99
XIV. "IF I HAD A POTATO!" - - - - -	103
XV. IN THE DIOCESE OF ST. ALBERT - - - - -	108
XVI. SOME MOVING INCIDENTS : COLD ; HUNGER ; SICKNESS ; PRAIRIE FIRE - - - - -	119
XVII. BRITISH COLUMBIA : THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY - - - - -	132
XVIII. TEXAS AS IT WAS - - - - -	140
XIX. THE OBLATES IN MEXICO - - - - -	146
XX. "GREATER LOVE NO MAN HATH" - - - - -	152
XXI. TEXAS DURING THE CIVIL WAR - - - - -	155
XXII. THROUGH DEATH TO LIFE - - - - -	156
XXIII. GRACE DIEU CHAPLAINCY - - - - -	159
XXIV. YORKSHIRE AND LIVERPOOL - - - - -	163
XXV. LEEDS - - - - -	170
XXVI. MOUNT ST. MARY'S, 1851 - - - - -	175
XXVII. IRELAND - - - - -	181
XXVIII. TOWER HILL - - - - -	190
XXIX. KILBURN - - - - -	204
XXX. CEYLON - - - - -	210
XXXI. NATAL - - - - -	223
XXXII. CONCLUSION - - - - -	237

PREFACE

THE *Sketches* which are here republished, in abridged form, were written over thirty years ago. A first volume was issued in 1879, a second and concluding volume in 1882, only a little while before the author's death. The work received high praise, not only from half a dozen Catholic newspapers, but from the *Athenaeum* and the *Morning Post*. The *Globe* called it "a work of historical interest and literary merit." The *Church Times*, taking occasion to admire "the missionary efforts of the Roman communion," concluded by saying, "Many interesting extracts from Mr. Cooke's book would justify our appreciation." There was a general opinion, indeed, that, as the review in the *Freeman's Journal* declared, Father Cooke had made known to the public "incidents and adventures before which some of the most thrilling tales of books of travel pale away into insignificance."

The *Sketches* have now for long been out of print, and there has been a wish in many quarters to see them re-issued, in a popular form and in one volume. By what will, perhaps, be considered only prudent abridgement, it has been possible to comply with this wish. The omissions do not take anything away from the general character of the work, and they have enabled us to make some needed additions and some slight changes. All the changes, additions, and omissions have been made in agreement with the judicious advice of Father W. M. J. Ring, the veteran missionary, who not only worked for long years with Father Cooke, but also lived for a time under the very eye of Bishop de Mazenod himself, by whom he was ordained to the priesthood.

Father Cooke, the author of these *Sketches*, deserves remembrance for his own sake. In 1843, when he was

twenty-two years of age, he offered himself to Father Casimir Aubert, the first Oblate of Mary Immaculate in these countries, to become one of the priests of his missionary society. Robert Cooke was the grandson of the Protestant, and (presumably) Cromwellian, landlord, whose residence was Kiltinan House, Co. Tipperary. Father Cooke's grandmother, when a widow, became a Catholic through the good impressions made upon her by a Catholic maid-servant, of whose days for confession and Holy Communion she could not help taking special notice. When Mrs. Cooke became a Catholic, she abandoned her home and property to her husband's younger brother, in order that her two sons might be left in her charge, and brought up Catholics. The penal laws were in force in those times. Father Cooke always believed that this pious and heroic woman (whom he had known in his young days) appeared to him by night, and brought him to the feet of the Blessed Virgin, to join a religious society bearing her name.

After his noviceship and studies in France, Father Cooke was ordained priest by Bishop de Mazenod, and sent at once to England. He worked for many years in Gracedieu and Whitwick, and was in the habit of preaching in Coalville, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and other Leicestershire villages. Mrs. Laura de Lisle, the widow of Ambrose Philipps de Lisle, wrote in 1882, on the occasion of Father Cooke's death: "I have always venerated him as a saint. There are few things I have regretted more than his leaving this neighbourhood." Father Cooke's works in England and Ireland are partially told in the following pages. And this was inevitable, for he was the chief worker himself in all that was done by the Oblates in establishing themselves in these countries. For a great part of his thirty-six years of priestly life, Father Cooke was Provincial, as well as the most successful of mission preachers in town and country. His personal holiness was thus spoken of by the late Brother Vernet, O.M.I., himself a very religious man, very intelligent, and well educated. "For ten years it was my happiness to have Father Cooke for Superior. During our first two Lents together, not an ounce of meat was allowed into the house. This holy missionary used to wear

alternately a hairshirt, and an iron chain studded with points."

There is a priest in the diocese of Leeds who in 1893 was kind enough to write for us some particulars of his own family history, which he did not hesitate to consider as proofs of "Father Cooke's Gift of Prophecy." Certain it is that there was a true odour of sanctity about Father Cooke. His last good work was the writing of this history of Bishop de Mazenod and the Oblates. The materials for it were collected and put together under difficulties, and, shortly after its publication, Father Cooke died (18th June, 1882) a holy death at Tower Hill, London, where there is a monument to his memory in the Church of the English Martyrs. He is buried in the Catholic cemetery at Kensal Green. R.I.P.

CHURCH OF MARY IMMACULATE,
INCHICORE, DUBLIN.

December 8, 1913.

BISHOP DE MAZENOD

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD : 1782-91.

CHARLES JOSEPH EUGENE DE MAZENOD was born at Aix in Provence, the 1st of August, 1782. His family was illustrious by its rank, and by the eminent position in the magistracy of that country, occupied at various times with distinction by some of its members. His own father, President of the *Cour des Comptes* of Provence, and one of the Presidents of the Provençal Parliament (*i.e.*, Supreme Court), was admitted to the intimate friendship of the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI. Signs of future greatness and sanctity began to manifest themselves at an early age in young Eugene de Mazenod. Whilst yet a child in the arms of his nurse, an infallible means of silencing his cries when he wept, was to take him to a church. There he instantly became calm and still, no matter how excited he was before entering the sacred edifice. Was this a presage of that deep reverence for the Sanctuaries of God which became a striking characteristic of his after-life ? A great force of will began to show itself in him at a very early age. He never asked for anything with the sobs or tears of a child, no matter how much he desired it ; but with calm resoluteness would he say : " I will have it." Such proud bearing in a child so young often provoked the smile of the cursory looker-on ; but more thoughtful observers would predict for him a future, marked by a strong will, either for good or evil.

Surrounded by a numerous retinue of domestics, all ready to lavish their services upon him, young Eugene refused to receive at their hands any service that was not absolutely required, or which he could render to himself. He was scarcely six years old when he began to exercise acts of benevolence towards the poor, even at personal

inconvenience and sacrifice. One day at this age, he met in the street a poor little charcoal vendor, all in rags. Moved with a sudden feeling of compassion, he quickly divested himself of his jacket and joyfully placed it on the shoulders of the poor half-naked boy. His maternal grandfather, a venerable nobleman of extraordinary piety and great experience of the world, had much to do in forming the character of Eugene. He wisely counselled that a free scope should be given to his childish ardour in relieving the wants of the poor, and that small sums of money should be placed at his disposal for this object. A close intimacy existed between the family of the De Mazenods and that of M. de Revest, an eminent lawyer, who resided also at Aix. One day Eugene, who was a frequent and welcome visitor of the Revest family, entering their drawing-room, perceived they had no fire, though the day was cold. "What!" he exclaimed, "you have no fire on so cold a day." The ladies of the house, wishing to test what they had heard of his compassion for every sort of suffering in others, feigning poverty, said: "We are poor, and wood is dear." Hearing these words, Eugene quickly bowed and withdrew. An hour elapsed, and a knocking was heard at the outer gate. It was opened to admit young Eugene, rolling a small wheelbarrow filled with pieces of wood which he had collected. Advancing with his precious burden, he deposited it at the door of the apartment where the Revests were assembled, saying: "Now you can make a fire and warm yourselves." Wiping the tiny sweat drops from his brow, he hastily retired. He was only six years old when he performed this feat of charity. Great was the emotion of those who witnessed it. Many years afterwards, members of the Revest family spoke of it with tears. His thoughtful parents, whilst yielding to the advice of his grandfather in giving full scope to the benevolent zeal of Eugene, always kept him in view themselves or had him followed by a tutor, whose eye was ever upon him in their absence, without his being aware. He never spoke himself of the good works he performed, and his parents acted as if they were in complete ignorance of them. During his whole life a tender sympathy for the sufferings and afflictions of others, and

especially of those from whom he had received marks of kindness, was a beautiful feature in his character. When ten years old, being at the College of Turin, he received news of the death of the daughter of the *femme de chambre* of Madame de Mazenod, his mother. The thought of the grief of this poor woman, who had been very kind to him, so afflicted him that he lay for hours upon his bed, bathed in tears and moaning deeply. He manifested from the beginning a frank and upright spirit, and showed an abhorrence of every species of untruthfulness. He never excused himself when he committed a fault. One day thoughtlessly, he gave to a young boy whom he chanced to meet, a costly article from his mother's toilet table in exchange for some other object. The parents of this boy were frightened when they found in his possession an article of such value. Discovering that it belonged to Madame de Mazenod, they compelled him to go with them to restore to her the article in question. Eugene hearing the cries of the poor boy, whom his parents were accusing of dishonesty, rushed out, exclaiming with vehemence: "He is innocent; it is I who committed the fault. Do not blame him, it is I who ought to be punished." Madame de Mazenod, addressing some words of gentle reproof to her son, praised the upright conduct of the parents of the poor boy, and handed back to his mother the article that had been restored to her, as a gift, in testimony of her appreciation of their conduct in the matter.

Eugene, even when a mere child, took no interest in the ordinary sports of children. He showed a preference for the society of grown-up persons, and would listen for hours attentively to conversations upon serious matters, seated at the feet of the speakers, and looking up with deep interest into their faces, scanning every expression of their countenances. He amused himself, however, willingly, in erecting mimic oratories, and in representing with his companions the ceremonies of the Church. He did this with great gravity and composure, and he would show himself much displeased if his companions smiled at his sermons, or seemed distracted or dissipated in the functions he assigned to them.

CHAPTER II.

EXILE : NICE AND TURIN : 1791-4.

THE earliest years of young Eugene de Mazenod were spent in the sunshine of a happy home. In a human sense, his position was well-nigh everything that could be desired ; wealth, rank, refinement, shed their lustre upon his path. The last male heir of an honoured house, he was the object of the fondest love of devoted and most worthy parents. His father's hospitality often assembled around him some of the most distinguished names of the *noblesse* of Provence, and other parts of France. But it was the religious character of his father's household that gave its chief charm in the eyes of this pious child to his early home. Good example and inducement to piety encircled him on every side. His soul remained ever pure and unworldly. This was the secret of his unselfishness, of the depth and tenderness of his friendships, and of his pure attachments. If young de Mazenod had been destined merely to fill the place of a Christian gentleman in the world, he might have been well formed for his post in such a home as that which we have been describing. But his was to be a loftier destiny. The plant of holiness within his soul has to grow up and become strong as the young oak amidst storms. This happy household is to be dispersed ; its members have to seek safety in flight to another land. The Revolutionary tempest has burst over France. Eugene's father is marked out for death by a decree of Robespierre. Fortunately he received an early intimation of his intended doom, and saved himself by fleeing to Italy. Another decree is passed by the Convention, ordering the children of nobles to be put to death. Eugene's life is in danger. An immediate departure from France is necessary for his safety. A day's delay may be fatal to him. He has not yet reached his ninth year, and he has just risen from a bed of severe illness, when he is forced to set out

upon an exile which will continue for several years. The morrow is fixed for his departure. All arrangements have to be made in profound secrecy ; an indiscreet word might prove fatal. The secret is confided to the child, and he keeps it with fidelity. The only favour he asks is, that he may be allowed to embrace his friends of the Revest family before parting from them, perhaps for ever. His request is granted, but on condition that he makes no mention of his departure. He paid his visit, and he kept his secret. But it cost him sorely to do so ; the tears in his eyes and his sobbing breast as he bade them adieu, almost betrayed him. The next day they learnt the cause of his emotion, and then it became their turn to shed many tears. Eugene left Aix, March 31st, 1791, in the company of his uncle, the Chevalier de Mazenod. On Holy Saturday, 3rd April, 1791, he reached Nice, where he sojourned for five months, and where he was joined by his mother and his grandfather. He himself writes, in reference to this period of his life : " As it appeared likely that things would not alter soon in France, my parents decided on providing for my education, by placing me in the College of Nobles at Turin ; my mother and my grandmother undertook to conduct me thither. My mother was then but thirty years old, and my grandmother was over fifty. Everything that reminds me of my grandmother touches me to the heart. I loved her as dearly as I loved my mother ; that is to say, I loved her as much as one can love another in this life." The tenderness of his heart appears in these words. His piety did not interfere with his deep affections for those to whom he was bound by the ties of kindred, nor did his love for them cloud or chill his piety. The college in which he was placed at Turin was conducted by the Barnabite Fathers. Eugene stayed there three years. He made his first Communion on Holy Thursday, 5th April, 1792. He had not then reached his tenth year. He always headed his class whilst in that college, and he was remarkable for his spirit of regularity and love of rule. The Rector, noticing these qualities in him, assigned to him a certain post of authority over his fellow-pupils. With perfect ease he took the place assigned to him, and his ascendancy was cheerfully acknowledged by

those placed under his surveillance. Thus did he give tokens, even then, of being born to guide and direct others. His father, who never lost an occasion of giving good counsel to Eugene, wrote to him to use wisely the authority confided to him, and to temper it with compassion for the weaknesses of his companions. The superiors of the college, who always treated him with the greatest affection, often proposed him as a model for the other pupils to imitate. In the interval between his first Communion and his Confirmation, he gave proof of great delicacy of sentiment and firmness of character. An excrescence had appeared close to one of his eyes, for the removal of which it was necessary that he should undergo a painful operation, which was to be performed by Dr. Pinchinati, the first Surgeon to the King. The day for the operation was fixed, and Madame de Mazenod was to come from Nice on the previous day to be present at it. Eugene wished to spare his mother the pain of seeing him suffer. He begged earnestly of the Rector to fix an earlier day for the operation than that which had been appointed, so that when his mother arrived she might find it already performed. The Rector was greatly pleased with the delicate foresight of Eugene, and readily consented to his wishes. Arrangements were speedily made for the performing of the operation, which was to take place in the Rector's room. The surgeon arrived, accompanied by several of his pupils. Eugene was complimented on his courage. But what a humiliation was awaiting him ! The poor child's resolution began to fail him at sight of the array of surgical instruments which were to be employed in the operation. He begged the doctor and his pupils to retire, and he withdrew, terrified, into his chamber. Presently he began to reflect upon his sudden cowardice, and to seek to discover its cause. A moment's reflection brought to his mind the fact that he had not prepared himself for the operation by earnest prayer, and that he had been trusting too much in his own resolution and courage, without asking God for help. Not losing a moment, he flung himself on his knees in spirit at the feet of Jesus Christ, whom he tenderly invoked. He addressed, also, a most fervent prayer to the Holy Ghost, asking for

the gift of fortitude. His prayer was heard, for he immediately felt a new courage kindling within his breast. He returned without delay to the Rector's rooms, and declared himself ready to undergo the operation, and begged that the doctor, who had not yet left the premises, might again be asked to perform it. The operation was very long and very painful ; the heroic child never once winced under it. Not a tear rolled down his cheek, not a sigh or complaint escaped from his lips, for *then* he was sustained not merely by a human, but by a supernatural courage—by that gift of fortitude which the Holy Ghost, in answer to his fervent prayer, bestowed upon him. His mother arrived that same evening. Her joy was great when she learnt that, owing to the affectionate thoughtfulness of her child, and his heroic courage, she was spared the pain of witnessing his great sufferings under the operation. On Trinity Sunday, June 13th, 1792, he received the Sacrament of Confirmation at the hands of Cardinal Costa, Archbishop of Turin. The ardour of Eugene in the practice of piety was not slackened during his stay in the college.

CHAPTER III.

EXILE : VENICE : 1794-7.

LOUIS XVI. had laid his head upon the block. The revolutionary wave was rolling from France towards neighbouring countries. Piedmont was threatened. The *émigrés* who had taken refuge there had to seek for a safer asylum. Eugene had to flee with the rest. Shelter was sought by many in Venice. The departure from Turin was solemn and touching. Many of the first families of France were assembled in this latter place, in comparative poverty. To save their lives they had to quit their homes in haste, taking with them whatever fragments of their fortunes they could collect together in the hurry and terror of the moment. Many ecclesiastics,—some of the highest rank, and some far advanced in years—were also amongst the exiles. Let us allow Eugene to describe, in his own words, the departure for Venice : “ On the 2nd of May, 1794, my father freighted a vessel of considerable size, in which he embarked with all his family, which was composed of the following members : my father, Charles Antoine de Mazenod ; my mother, Marie Rose Eugénie de Joannis ; my grand-uncle, Charles Auguste André de Mazenod, Archdeacon and Vicar-General of Marseilles ; my uncle, Charles Fortuné de Mazenod, Vicar-General of Aix [first Bishop of Marseilles under the Restoration] ; my uncle, Eugene de Mazenod, Chevalier de Saint Louis, Captain in the Royal Navy, afterwards Vice-Admiral ; my aunt, the Marquise de Pierrefeu ; and the young Marquis, her son ; and Nanon, the *femme de chambre* of my mother.* A great number of *émigrés* begged of my

* There were some other persons, including Eugene's only surviving sister, Nathalie (born in 1788), afterwards the Marquise de Boisgelin. In *L'Univers* of May 5, 1909, was announced the death of the “Marquise de Boisgelin, douairière, at Aix-en-Provence.” Was this the daughter-in-law of Bishop de Mazenod's sister ?

father to be allowed to embark with us, to which request he willingly consented. Amongst these were very many Priests. Our voyage lasted twelve days. We stopped every night in some place along the banks of the Po. We met everywhere with the most cordial hospitality. The revolutionary bands had not yet reached these places. All vied with one another in acts of kindness towards us. At Cremona the Marquise de Colonia, who, with her husband, had joined our party, was followed in the street by a devoted and generous lady, who touched with compassion at the sight of the misfortunes of so many noble *émigrés* fleeing from their country, sought to slip into her hand a package containing several pieces of gold, which, however, was politely refused. The next day we cast anchor in a delicious spot, under the shade of wide-spreading trees. The joyousness of the scene communicated itself to our hearts : some sang, some engaged in lively conversation. No one seeing us would imagine that we were a band of refugees fleeing from tyrants, who sought our lives, and had taken possession of our goods. A vessel, also laden with *émigrés*, among whom were many priests, followed us closely and stopped at the same spot. My parents had here the consolation of meeting many old friends, amongst whom were Mgr. de Beausset, Bishop of Fréjus, and the Marquis de Grimaldi. They shed tears together over their common misfortunes, and consoled one another as well as they were able."

Venice was at last reached on the eve of the Ascension, and lodgings were secured with difficulty. The city was crowded, owing to the historic public festival which was then being celebrated—the Doge's marriage with the Sea—and the price for apartments was high. Poverty was beginning to tell. That noble family of exiles, including two venerable ecclesiastics, and one faithful domestic—eleven in all—had to crowd themselves into a narrow dingy lodging ; but every heart was resigned, and God's holy will was praised. Here Eugene was schooled by personal experience in the knowledge of the privations which the poor have to endure. It was well that it should be so, for he was afterwards to become the distinguished apostle of the poor. By the sale of Madame de Mazenod's diamonds,

a good house was at length secured on the canal, opposite the Grimaldi palace.

We will here draw attention to a circumstance of a most Providential character, which had a marked and most decisive influence on the whole of the after career of Eugene. Close to this new residence stood the house of one of the richest commercial families of Venice, which was noted for the piety and munificent character of its members. The name of this family was Zinelli. It consisted of a venerable mother and six sons, two of whom were ecclesiastics—one in deacon's orders, and the other, who was named Don Bartolo, was a priest, who died afterwards in the odour of sanctity. It was this holy priest whom God placed in the way of Eugene at a critical and trying moment. The poor boy found himself in Venice without books or professors, and the straitened circumstances of his exiled family forbade all human hope of his educational needs being soon supplied. He was then in his thirteenth year, and a precious period of his life was being spent in enforced idleness. A parish priest, Don Milesi, afterwards Patriarch of Venice, spoke to the Zinellis, whose own attention too had been drawn to Eugene. Even at that early age he had a grave and noble bearing stamped upon him, that forcibly struck beholders. He was tall beyond his years, and a refined beauty, which distinguished him through after-life, was marked upon his features. Don Bartolo Zinelli was deeply interested in this modest and intelligent boy, whom he saw frequently passing before his door, and he quickly fell in with the parish priest's suggestions. One day seeing Eugene listlessly gazing from a window he accosted him, saying : " Master Eugene, are you not afraid you are losing your time ? " " Alas ! sir," replied Eugene, " I cannot help it. I am a stranger here, and I have not a single book at my disposal." " Let that be no obstacle, my child," kindly answered Don Bartolo, " my library is well supplied with all the books you may require, and it is entirely at your service." Don Bartolo invited Eugene to visit him the following day, which he did with his father's ready consent. Eugene thus describes his first visit to Don Bartolo. " He received me with the greatest kindness. He conducted me

through his library, and from that to his cabinet where he spent his days in study with his brother, who was then only a deacon. He pointed to a vacant place at the study table and said: 'That place was occupied by a dear brother whom God has lately called to Himself. I shall be most happy to see you occupy it in his stead. It will be a great gratification to me to direct your studies, and to help you to complete them.' One may well imagine how great was my surprise and joy at such a proposal. I accepted it with expressions of lively gratitude, being certain that my father would gladly give his consent. When I communicated the good news to my parents, they thanked God for having secured for me so great an advantage. From that day, for four years, I pursued my course of studies with unvarying constancy, under the guidance of my benevolent tutor, whom I sought every morning immediately after hearing Mass. I worked at my studies till mid-day, when I returned home for dinner. After dinner Don Bartolo came for me to join him in a walk to visit some church, where we stopped for a while to pray. I then returned to my studies, and continued at them till evening. At that hour several priests in the neighbourhood assembled to recite the Holy Office with Don Bartolo, after which all met in the drawing-room, where we joined some friends of the family in an hour's cheerful recreation. Coffee was then served round, and everybody but the members of the household, and myself, retired. As I was looked upon as one of the family, I stayed behind for supper, and also for the Rosary and night prayers." Such was the manner of life led by Eugene for four years, under the judicious and saintly care of a refined scholar and a great servant of God. Under such tuition, the soul of Eugene made rapid progress in the most exalted virtues. He learned quickly to despise the vanities of the world, for which he began to conceive a supreme contempt. Prayer became his chief delight, and he secretly practised extraordinary mortifications. He slept on the bare ground and fasted frequently. The intervals between his hours of study were spent, for the most part, in prayer or spiritual reading. He made his confession every Saturday, and received Holy Communion on Sundays and on the chief festivals. He

served Mass every morning, and recited daily the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin. Such was his method of life between his thirteenth and sixteenth years. The desire of consecrating himself to God, and of becoming a priest, manifested itself about this time.

“One day,” as he relates himself, “after I had read for my grand-uncle, as I had been daily accustomed to do, a chapter of the New Testament, he said to me gravely, ‘Eugene, is it true that you wish to embrace the ecclesiastical state?’ ‘Yes, Uncle,’ I replied without hesitation, ‘it is quite true!’ ‘How could you think, my child,’ he then said, ‘of such a thing? Are you not the last link of our family, which will become extinct if you accomplish such an intention?’ I was astonished to hear such words fall from the lips of one so venerable and holy; I answered with much emotion, ‘Uncle, what could be more honourable for our family than to end in a priest?’ My uncle had spoken thus only for the purpose of testing my feelings. When he heard my answer, he at once expressed his delight that a child of thirteen years should utter such sentiments. He tenderly embraced me, and gave me his blessing.” This early vocation was to be followed only after the lapse of several years. Eugene had to pass through many trials, and undergo a long period of exile, before the desire of consecrating himself to God in the priesthood could be accomplished. In the meanwhile Don Bartolo proceeded in carrying out the pleasing task he had undertaken, of educating the mind, heart, and inner soul of his holy pupil. The intellectual progress of Eugene corresponded with the high expectations which had been formed of his capacity during his stay at the College of Turin. But what delighted his pious teacher most, was to witness the unmistakable signs of his rapid and solid progress in the knowledge and love of God.

A short journey that he had to make at this time gave him an opportunity of exhibiting, on a small scale, that zeal for the divine glory and the good of souls, which in after years was to display itself over so wide a surface. Madame de Mazenod returned to France in 1795, in order to have her name taken off the list of emigrants, and so to save some of her property. Eugene accompanied her as far as

Tuscany. The great revolution was then extending its ramifications, and the overthrow of Christianity seemed its main object. Eugene longed for an opportunity of publicly declaring his faith in Christ crucified, and even of suffering for it. In starting on his journey he hung a large crucifix around his neck, as a symbol of his belief, and of his readiness to confess it before the world. The servants at the first hotel at which he stopped on his journey, were tainted with infidel notions. His crucifix was caught sight of, and forthwith they commenced to utter blasphemies against Jesus Christ, and to laugh mockingly at the devout child, who lovingly bore the sacred image. The holy boy, instead of being cowed or intimidated, boldly rebuked them for their unbelief, and reduced them quickly to silence. Their scorn was soon changed into admiration by his words, so full of energy and wisdom, and by his courageous attitude in defending, on that occasion, the interests of religion, which bespoke in him the true confessor of the faith. When he reached Leghorn, his party were delayed for some days in that city. Eugene made the discovery that a poor servant in the house where they were staying was ignorant of the principal mysteries of religion. Filled with zeal in her behalf, he undertook at once the task of instructing her. This became his chief occupation during the days he remained in that city. He explained the catechism to her in a manner so interesting, and so full of holy doctrine, that the proprietress of the establishment, a lady of good education, came to listen to him, and acknowledged that she had profited greatly by his instructions. This was a prelude to that ministry of zeal which he was to exercise at a future day in behalf of ignorant and neglected souls.

Returning to Venice, he resumed his studies under the direction of Don Bartolo. An accident occurred to him about this time, which nearly cost him his life. One day while fishing at his door, on the banks of the Grand Canal, his foot slipped, and he fell into the water, which was twelve feet deep. No one was present to render him assistance, but God was watching over a life which was to be dedicated entirely to His glory. He recommended himself to his Guardian Angel, rose again to the surface, and was able to

regain the bank without any help, though he could not swim. His great fear was, that his mother should hear of the occurrence before he could assure her himself that he was quite safe.

The tender affectionateness of his disposition, which showed itself so frequently through his life, lessened in no degree his firmness of character. The following instance will show how ready he was to trample human respect under foot, whenever the fulfilment of a religious duty was in question. One day, being invited to a public dinner at the Spanish Embassy, he perceived that all were taking their places without the usual prayers being said : he remained still standing after the company, which was very numerous, had sat at table. Every eye was fixed upon him. Indignant with himself for having hesitated a moment, he openly made the sign of the Cross ; he recited quietly and devoutly the accustomed prayers, not heeding what remarks people might make about him. He was sometimes heard to say, in later life, that he never conquered human respect without being interiorly rewarded by our divine Lord.

It was Eugene's good fortune, when at Venice, to mix in the society of learned and holy men, and to take part in their conversation. He turned this opportunity to the fullest account, and frequently listened to discussions upon questions of philosophy and religion. Occasionally he questioned the speakers in terms that filled them with astonishment. They were amazed that one, who was still a child in years, should display such an amount of knowledge, and such lucidity of thought, on abstruse and difficult questions.

The following incident will show how far he was versed in the doctrine of Divine Grace, and what a horror he had conceived of the heresy of Jansenism. A little book fell into his hands, entitled, "*L'ami de la Jeunesse*," written by the Abbé Tessier, which he read with much pleasure, but having discovered in it a tendency to Jansenism, Eugene felt it his duty to write a profession of anti-Jansenist faith in the commencement of the volume. The book was lying on Eugene's table, when one day he was visited by another *émigré*, Monseigneur de Montagnac,

Bishop of Tarbes, who happened to open it and read what Eugene had written. The clear and precise terms in which the subtle heresy of the Jansenists was repudiated, and the true doctrine set forth in this profession of Eugene's faith, made it difficult for the good prelate to believe that it had been written by a child.

That filial reverence and love for the Vicar of Jesus Christ that readiness to defend the rights of the Holy See, for which he was to become conspicuous as a great Bishop of God's Church, began to appear in his early youth. One day, an *émigré* Canon of Paris forgot himself so far as to indulge in an unbecoming witticism, of which the Holy Father Pius VI. was the object. The high-spirited boy waited to see whether somebody in the company, older than himself, would remonstrate on the impropriety of such language; but finding that nobody undertook this duty, he ventured himself respectfully but courageously to do so. He spoke in tones of fearless energy, that startled the aged ecclesiastic into a sense of the impropriety of his language, and silenced him for the rest of the evening. This incident, which was much spoken of, reached the ears of members of the exiled Royal Family of France, and drew words of high praise from their lips.

In exile, in Venice, on 22nd November, 1795, Eugene's grand-uncle died the death of the just. Charles Augustus Andrew de Mazenod had been Vicar-General of Mgr. de Belsunce, and of his successor. He escaped the episcopate himself through his influence with his intimate friend, the Bishop of Orleans, in whose hands the appointment of Bishops lay.

After three years and a half in Venice, beautiful, indeed, but not like home, the French exiles had to flee still further before the victorious arms of their own countrymen. Eugene de Mazenod had to leave a place where he had been growing from childhood into youth under beloved and holy influence, including that of the blind Patriarch of Venice, Mgr. Giovanelli, who dearly loved the company of the lively French boy. The emigrants had to emigrate again.

CHAPTER IV.

EXILE : NAPLES—PALERMO : 1798-1802.

THE army of the French Republic had entered Venice. Continued residence in that city was full of danger for the *émigrés*. Eugene's father resolved to remove with his family to Naples. It cost the grateful boy a bitter pang to separate from the Zinelli family, and especially from his beloved preceptor and friend, Don Bartolo. The separation, however, was for life ; but an intercourse by letter was kept up till the saintly death of Don Bartolo. The journey to Naples was decided upon, partly in consequence of the pressing invitation of Baron de Talleyrand, former French Ambassador at the Sicilian Court. The utmost economy had to be practised on that journey. To travel by land from Venice to Naples would have been too expensive ; the route by sea was consequently selected. The family left Venice on the 11th November 1797, in a wretched cattle-boat, and arrived in Naples on the 1st January 1798, having spent fifty-one days at sea, and suffered fearful hardships.

Eugene passed sorrowfully the year he spent at Naples. He led a retired life in that capital, and did not wish to make new acquaintances. He went occasionally with his father and uncles to spend the evening with the Baron de Talleyrand. Whilst at Naples, and later at Palermo, in the *salons* of the Russian Embassy, he met Admiral Lord Nelson. Speaking in one of his notes of this meeting, he says : " Nelson, no doubt, is a great sailor, but neither his appearance nor his manner is in his favour."

Still onward rolls the tide of Republican triumph. The French army is approaching the gates of Naples. The royal family is preparing for flight. Nelson is commanding a squadron of the British fleet in the Bay of Naples, to

afford a safe means of escape for the King and Queen, and their followers. Some Portuguese ships of war are also cruising in the Bay for the same object. The Queen of the Two Sicilies, who took a deep interest in the de Mazenod family, sent a messenger to inform them of the approaching danger, and to offer them means of escape on board one of the royal ships. On the memorable morning of the 21st of December 1798, the whole population of Naples and its environs was on the alert at an early hour. A vast multitude advanced tumultuously towards the royal palace. The rumour had spread that the King and Queen were about to flee from Naples, and the people were bent on preventing their flight. It was a moment full of danger for the French *émigrés*. The Republican Army, led by General Championnet, was approaching the gates of Naples. A further delay in that city on the part of the *émigrés* would be likely to lead to imprisonment or death. The populace, in frantic dread of the approaching invasion, began to treat all foreigners as Jacobins or spies. Departure from Naples was the only chance of safety. This might have been accomplished easily a few days before, but now access to the shipping is cut off. The streets are full of angry crowds, who block up all approaches to the harbour, being determined to allow nobody to embark. Several *émigré* families who were endeavouring to escape, were seized and cast into prison, and the packages containing their goods were broken open and scattered. Some lost their lives; the Russian Consul received a mortal wound and a royal courier was massacred on that occasion. The Portuguese Admiral, who was an old friend of the Chevalier de Mazenod, Eugene's uncle, had made arrangements for the reception on board his ship of the de Mazenod family. A few sailors were sent on shore to aid in embarking their luggage. Eugene, who had spent the previous night in packing up, started at day-break in company of the armed band of Portuguese sailors, unaware of the tumult that had been suddenly aroused in the city. The news of the rapid approach of the Republican army had come during the night, and the city awoke in terror. Unexpectedly Eugene found himself in the midst of a

fierce multitude. His way to the harbour lay through the square that fronted the royal palace, where the crowd was thickest, and the excitement greatest. Eugene was then a youth of seventeen, but he looked already a full-grown man. A glance of his eyes revealed to him the full extent of his danger, and in his heart he renewed the prayer which he had made that morning before setting out upon his way. Who can be so brave in the hour of peril as those who feel that God is with them? Eugene had a something to preserve almost as precious in his eyes as his own life; it was the last remnant of the household goods of his family. Modest in bulk, yet it contained many *souvenirs*, to nearly every one of which was attached some special value. Some were sacred objects, holy vessels of the altar, and vestments. Some had a domestic sacredness about them. They had come down as heirlooms—as gifts made upon death beds, by the loving to the beloved. Some were of a more homely character, but their loss would impose grave privations, especially in their present straitened circumstances, on the members of his family. These Eugene was resolved to preserve as a sacred deposit, even at the risk of his life. Some men are born to sway crowds; they have the gift of fascinating multitudes. Eugene seemed to be possessed of some such gift on that memorable day. Onward he continued to advance, inspiring with confidence the few brave men who carried his effects, though at every step death stared them in the face. The door of the arsenal was seen in the distance; he resolves to reach it through the crowd. Fierce glances are bent upon him, but no one dares to molest him. He arrives at the arsenal gate. He speaks with authority to the sentinel, and is allowed to pass in. He is saved! The rumour had reached his father and his uncle that he had been assassinated. He arrives covered with dust, to dispel their fears. His first act was to go to the nearest church to give thanks to God for his deliverance from danger, by assisting at Holy Mass. The next day a reaction set in; the wild excitement that had agitated the population of Naples, gave way to a stupor of despondency. The departure of the *émigrés* was no

longer opposed by the people. The King and Queen and royal children took refuge on board Lord Nelson's ship, which immediately put to sea and sailed for Palermo. The following day the de Mazenod family embarked for the same port, in the ship commanded by the Count de Puy-ségur, the Portuguese Admiral. A violent gale suddenly sprang up. Fortunately Eugene's party had not yet left the harbour. But the king and his suite were overtaken by the storm on the high sea. Prince Albert, the king's youngest son, died in the transit from fatigue. For several days the Portuguese ship lay at anchor in the Bay, waiting for the gale to subside. During this delay, Eugene visited the shore to arrange some matters which had been overlooked in the hurry of departure. In returning to the ship, an opportunity was afforded him of giving proof of great personal courage and physical prowess, by which probably several lives, including his own, were saved. They had scarcely put off from the shore, when their little bark was caught in a hurricane. The night had fallen, and it was pitch dark. The sailors gave themselves up as lost. A poor woman who was going to join her husband on board the ship, lay paralysed with fear. Eugene alone retained his presence of mind. Instinct in that perilous moment served him in place of experience. He assumed the command of the boat, and enforced obedience. His voice was heard above the storm, encouraging the crew to make those desperate efforts that were necessary for their safety. With great difficulty the ship's side was reached. The great frigate rolled fearfully. The little boat threatened every moment to disappear in the surf. With rope in hand, Eugene sprang upon the bulwarks of the ship : the distance he had to span in that leap was so great, that those who witnessed it expected, in the instant, that he would sink midway. Great was their surprise when they saw him emerge from the spray in safety, and proceed heroically to the rescue of the companions of his danger. At length the ship put out to sea. Palermo was reached on the Feast of the Epiphany 1799.

Eugene had now arrived, in appearance, though not in years, at man's estate. In person he was tall and well-

proportioned, a manly beauty shone in his countenance ; his bearing was courtly, without being in any way effeminate. A great gentleness of manner, combined with a cheerful disposition, graced his intercourse with those around him. He was a close observer of men and things ; in conversation he could pass, with easy transition, from the great questions of religion and politics, which were then agitating Europe, to the eloquent *critique* on works of ancient and modern art. He had a rare power of putting his soul into his words, especially when virtue had to be defended, or the cause of the poor and afflicted pleaded. We need not be surprised that he should become quickly the favourite of that distinguished society, which was then assembled in Palermo, where the royal family of Naples were holding their Court. He was in particular relationship with the family of Prince de Vintimiglia, with whom he was connected by ties of kindred. The holy Princess of Vintimiglia desired very much that her two sons, who were grown-up youths, should be brought, as much as possible, into contact with Eugene, to be benefited by the example of his extraordinary virtues. He had indeed a second home in the beautiful residence of this family. It was there that he became the intimate companion and friend of the unfortunate Duke de Berry, brother of the French King, Louis XVI., who was a frequent visitor there, and who quickly entered into terms of close friendship with Eugene. They frequently made excursions together, during one of which Eugene met with a severe accident, which became the occasion of his receiving much kindness on the young prince's part.

It required a virtue as solidly grounded as that of Eugene to resist the false charms and enticements which the world put in his way at this period of his life. He was possessed of those qualities which the world would most seek for in its favourites—rank, youth, a handsome form, a noble bearing, sparkling powers of conversation, a winning fascination of manner, ready wit, and the prospect of some day inheriting great ancestral wealth. He might have become one of its idols, had he so chosen. The paths to its honours and pleasures were open to him. Tempters

were not absent, who brought all their powers to bear on his young heart and imagination. Those vices which are too often fostered in the atmosphere of Courts, rose as a stumbling block in his way, but they did not cause him to stumble. His heart ever remained chaste and pure. It was tender to overflowing, and full of loving sympathies, but it was also as firm as a rock in resisting the torrent of evil. The chastity of the young Christian heart under temptation, is a thing not of sentiment, but of faith, the faith which opens heaven and hell, and the view of the judgment-seat of God, to the eye of the young soul under temptation. Faith alone keeps that soul chaste and pure. It is the faith which reveals God's perfections to the gaze of the soul, and fills it with the love of His own eternal beauty, that disenchants it from the spell of earthly fascination. His faith was Eugene's safeguard. Living in the midst of a corrupt Society, assailed by the most seductive forms of temptation, sometimes having to battle against temptations designedly put in his way to cause his fall, he allowed not the innocence of his soul to be sullied.

CHAPTER V.

AGAIN AT AIX : 1802-8.

THE Peace of Amiens enabled many French emigrants to return to their homes. Eugene left his father and uncles at Palermo on October 11th, 1802. He arrived at Marseilles on the 25th, and lost no time in reaching his mother's house at Aix. His father's continuance in exile, placed him at the head of his house. From straitened circumstances, he passed to the sudden possession of great wealth, on the restoration of their estates to his family ; but this made no change in the simple and austere habits of his life. It afforded him but greater opportunities of doing good to others. An ample field for the exercise of his charity lay before him. The victims of the revolutionary tempest were craving on every side for help. Crowds of homeless wandering poor were to be met everywhere. The widows and orphans of those who had fallen in the recent wars were, in most cases, left to their own resources. The prisons were full. The sight of all this misery deeply affected the compassionate heart of young de Mazenod. He laboured with all his might to render aid to the suffering poor of his native city. His deepest compassion was excited by the wretched condition of the unhappy prisoners, who had to bear the two-fold torments of close confinement and insufficient food. Their rations consisted almost entirely of black bread. Eugene took a leading part in a society formed for their relief. He himself had recently passed through the privations of a long exile, and had learnt to sympathize with those who were suffering from cold and hunger within their blank prison walls. Several times every week he visited these poor captives in their cells, distributing with his own hands portions of bread and meat to each, and supplying to those of delicate health such food as their condition needed. There was a charm in his manner that

consoled and cheered them, more than any gift of his, by itself, could do. But his enlightened charity aimed more at benefiting their souls than their bodies. He discovered among them many who were steeped in ignorance of the principal truths of religion. These he would come, day after day, to instruct. When he heard of a poor prisoner being condemned to death, he would seek access to him, and endeavour to dispose him to repentance and the voluntary sacrifice of his life, by his exhortations and prayers, especially during the night preceding the prisoner's execution, which he would spend in his cell.

Some years of Eugene's early manhood, after his return from exile, were spent in the discharge of these works of devoted charity. But his soul sighed for a higher form of promoting the divine glory and of doing good to others, especially to the poor and the spiritually abandoned. The temporal desolation which the Revolution left in its wake, was a small evil to his glance of strong faith, when compared to the spiritual wilderness which it produced on its track. The faithful clergy had been sent *en masse* either to the scaffold or into exile. Those who managed to conceal themselves were few in number, and broken down by privations. The spiritual abandonment, especially of the poor in country places, was appalling. In sight of these evils, the desire of renouncing the world and of entering the priesthood, to devote himself to the salvation of souls, which had been so long stirring within his breast, now became irresistible. There was much to keep him then in the world. The charms of a holy and happy home, which had special attractions for one with a heart so warm as his; his duties as the head of his house, and as the last male representative of the elder branch of the family; the brilliant worldly career which seemed to lie before him; the prospect of the good he might do as a devout layman in the world,—all these might have been obstacles to his vocation. But he hearkened to the voice which spoke within his heart, saying, "Follow thou Me."

CHAPTER VI.

ST. SULPICE : 1808-II.

IN the lives of holy personages, we may remark how strikingly God watches over their journeying forwards on the path of their special call. How, at critical and decisive moments, He comes marvellously to their help. How He sends to the individual soul, at the very moment she needs it, her guide, her prophet, her apostle. Thus saints become the precursors of saints. Such was Elias to Eliseus ; such was Paul to Timothy ; such was Ignatius to Xavier. We have seen, already, how a holy priest rose up upon the path of young de Mazenod at Venice, sent on his way by God, to plant the first seeds of the priestly calling in his soul, and to foster their growth by the light and warmth of his teaching and example. Eugene was then a mere youth. Years had to elapse before it was permitted to him to approach the threshold of the sanctuary. He has now arrived at man's estate ; a great future is before him. If we lift the curtain of that future, we shall behold, appearing on the scene, the zealous missionary, the holy Founder of a new society of apostolic men, the great Bishop of the oldest Christian city in France. All this he will one day become. In his soul, in his mind and heart, there were aptitudes for every single phase and development of his triple calling. But the skilful hand was needed to mould them on the perfect priestly type, and to fit them for the great works which he was called to accomplish. At that time there was in France a man providentially raised up by the hand of God, as another Noah, whose ark, during the revolutionary tempest, was to ride upon the waters of the deluge, laden with the germs of the priestly

life, for the bringing forth of new generations of learned and holy priests in his country, after the floods had subsided. The Venerable Abbé Emery, the worthy successor of M. Olier, and the faithful disciple of his virtues, was then Superior of St. Sulpice. He was an intrepid confessor of the faith ; he suffered imprisonment, and was condemned to be guillotined, but escaped death by a sort of miracle. But he was to exhibit no less courage and firmness in opposing the daring encroachments of Napoleon upon the liberties of the Church. One day, during his contest with the saintly Pius VII, the Emperor sent for M. Emery, and asked in a tone of furious anger, " What is the Pope ? " " Sire," he replied, " I can hold no other opinion on that point than that which is contained in the catechism, taught by your Majesty's orders in all the churches of France : ' The Pope is the Head of the Church, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, to whom all Christians owe obedience.' Can a body exist without its head, without Him to whom, by Divine right, it owes obedience ? " " Well," rejoined the Emperor, " I grant the spiritual power ; but the temporal power was given to the Pope by Charlemagne, and I, as Charlemagne's successor, feel bound to take it back from him, because he does not know how to use it, and it hinders him in the discharge of his spiritual functions." Emery was prepared for this attack. " Your Majesty," he said, " knows the great Bossuet, and Bossuet, Sire, speaks thus : ' We are all aware that the Roman Pontiffs and the priestly order have received by the grant of kings, and do lawfully hold, property, rights, and principalities, as other men do, on very good titles. We know that these possessions, inasmuch as they are dedicated to God, should be sacred, and that no one can, without sacrilege, invade or seize them, or give them away to seculars. To the Apostolic See has been given the Sovereignty of the City of Rome, and of other possessions that the Holy See may, more freely and securely, exercise its power throughout the whole world. On this we sincerely congratulate, not only the Apostolic See, but also the Universal Church ; and we pray, with all the fervour of our heart, that this sacred principle may remain safe and untouched.' " Napoleon broke off the conference, but he

afterwards said : " The Abbé Emery spoke as a man who is master of his subject. I like to be talked to in that way."

United to this firmness, which was unmoved under the frown of princes and under the shadow of the scaffold, in M. Emery we find a deep and tender piety, a most ardent love of Jesus Christ, especially in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist, a child-like devotion to the Blessed Virgin, a zeal for religious discipline and exactitude, and also for the sanctification of souls, but especially for the sanctification of the clergy. Such was the spiritual master and guide whom a special and loving Providence had prepared for Eugene de Mazenod, as he approached the holy mountain of God, in following His call to the priestly state. The virtues and the spirit of the saintly Emery seemed to run, like liquid gold, into the mind and heart and bearing of young de Mazenod, in whose life they will often appear again in bright traits of priestly, and religious, and episcopal perfection.

Eugene entered St. Sulpice in 1808. His seminary home was not the building (dating from 1820) confiscated by the French Government in 1909 : it was a corner house of Rue de Vaugirard and Rue du Pot-de-fer. During the years which he spent in the seminary of St. Sulpice, he was privileged by being admitted, from the beginning, to the intimate friendship and confidence of the venerable M. Emery, who was then approaching his eightieth year. He was daily invited to M. Emery's room, and he frequently enjoyed the advantage of his intimate conversation. Considering the burning questions that were then agitating Europe, and France especially, of the right solution of many of which M. Emery held the key, such conversations must have been most profitable in forming the ecclesiastical mind of de Mazenod. He had been but a short time promoted to deacon's orders, when he was to be deprived of his spiritual father and friend. The good fight had been fought, and the faith had been kept, even in prison and chains, and God was about to call His faithful servant to Himself, to give him the crown of glory he so well merited. M. Emery may be said to have died in the arms of the Abbé de Mazenod, who was his constant attendant during his last

illness. After his death, the Abbé de Mazenod wrote in the following terms, to his mother :—

“ If you read the public journals, you will not be surprised at my prolonged silence. We have lost our venerable Superior. During his last illness, all my time was employed in waiting upon him ; and, after his death, which we all feel most deeply, the carrying out of the funeral arrangements devolved chiefly on me. To give you a true idea of the virtue of M. Emery, I should have to borrow the tongues of all men of merit to whom he was known. His death is one of the greatest calamities which could befall the Church in France, in the present critical times. He was the only bond of union capable of holding together the divided spirits of these sad times. All parties respected him, and acknowledged the sway of his undisputed merits. The Emperor himself was silent in his presence. He was one of those noble spirits—alas ! so rare in our days—who could not betray a duty, nor forsake a right principle. At the same time he possessed, in a supreme degree, the gift of conciliating all parties. He was, in a word, such a man as the Church most needed among her defenders in the present crisis. But God, who would have us feel that it is on Himself alone we should place our confidence, has taken from us one who seemed to be our last resource. May His holy will be in all things accomplished ! I shall never forget the example of priestly vigour and energy which he gave us up to the last. He yielded only when the approach of death laid him prostrate. It was impossible to prevent him from saying the Divine Office on his sick bed. As his end approached, he insisted on saying the Holy Mass once more before he died. It was a touching sight to behold that venerable priest, who was close upon his eightieth year, supported by two assistants, slowly advancing to the altar, thereon to offer the sacrifice of his life to the Lamb that he, with trembling hands, was about to immolate. It was my happiness to serve that last Mass. Deeply was I moved in witnessing this holy priest, who was almost in the agony of death, celebrating the sacred mysteries. The impressions then produced will remain ever indelible in my breast.”

CHAPTER VII.

“ THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR ” : 1811-16.

EUGENE DE MAZENOD was ordained priest at Amiens on 21st December, 1811. After his ordination, his birth, friendships, and merits opened to him the path of early preferment. But it was not for the honours of the sanctuary that he had quitted those of the world. During the years of his seminary life, he had constantly before his mind the motive which had induced him to abandon the world, and to embrace the ecclesiastical state—that of spending himself in labours for the souls of the poor and the spiritually destitute. The prisoners of Aix, his native town, where, as a layman, he had exercised already a true apostleship of zeal, came first before his mind. After his ordination, he felt a burning desire to labour among those poor prisoners. His ecclesiastical superiors willingly seconded his zealous wishes. Though not officially named Chaplain of the prison at Aix, he performed all the duties attached to that office. He felt moved by an interior impulse to seek occasions of accompanying criminals to the scaffold, and marvellous were the fruits of his courageous and pious zeal in this doleful ministry. Hardened hearts were by his words softened to repentance, and many died craving for mercy, who, had it not been for his charitable endeavours in their behalf, would have died in their despair. At that time a large number of Austrian prisoners of war arrived at Aix. Shortly after their arrival, a fearful plague broke out in their midst ; their chaplain, their physician, and the military officer in charge of them, were carried off

amongst the first victims of this dreadful malady. The Abbé de Mazenod hastened to offer his services to those poor, plague-stricken prisoners. The civil authorities were slow to accept this generous offer, being unwilling to expose a life so precious as his to so grave a danger ; for in the eyes of the public it was looked upon as certain death for any one to enter into the plague-stricken circle where those poor prisoners lay. But he was not to be deterred by such fears ; looking on it as a privilege to be coveted, were God so to will it, to die on such a battle-field of priestly devotedness. He was not long in the discharge of his ministry amongst the victims of the plague, when the dread malady seized upon himself. Finding himself attacked, as he thought mortally, he, before taking to his bed, went for the last time, as it seemed to him, to celebrate the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and to offer himself as a victim to God, in union with the Divine Victim of the altar. When it was known that the Abbé de Mazenod was lying amongst the victims of the plague, a deep and universal sorrow spread amongst the inhabitants of Aix. The churches were filled with devout crowds, imploring of God the favour of his recovery. The last sacraments had been administered to him, and he sank into unconsciousness, and it seemed that his death could not be long delayed. But God was moved by the earnest prayers offered for his recovery, and a favourable crisis put an end to the anxious fears felt for his life.

On his recovery he felt, in his gratitude to God, still more than ever called to devote himself to the work of promoting the divine glory, and of labouring for the salvation of souls. At Aix he found himself surrounded by young men of the upper classes. The example of his sacrifices, the fervour of his exhortations, and the sway of his personal influence, drew them around him, and attached them to him in filial reverence and submission. Availing himself of the favourable dispositions on their part, he formed them into a society entitled, "*La Congrégation de la Jeunesse Chrétienne.*" This society became thoroughly imbued with the spirit of its holy founder ; consisting, as it did, of young men belonging to the first families of Aix, the edification given by those

who composed it was the more impressive. Many came forth from it to shed the lustre of high Christian virtue on their various paths of life. This association presented many vocations to the priesthood, and some of the first missionary companions of Father de Mazenod were drawn from its ranks.

But the evangelizing of the rich was not the mission that he was to choose as the work of his predilection ; his heart was set upon labouring among the poor. Those splendid gifts of mind and utterance and of personal prestige which he possessed, were not to be employed in drawing around him fashionable crowds in favoured localities, but they were to be lavished amidst the poor in the villages of Provence, or amongst the working classes in the slums of great cities. " He has sent me to preach the gospel to the poor," was his chosen motto.

But he aimed at doing a greater good than could be accomplished by his individual efforts. Association with kindred spirits became a necessity, in his mind, for the evangelizing of the masses of the poor, on the scale which his ardent zeal suggested to him. He looked around him for those who would be fit and willing to join in his undertaking ; he prayed much for light and assistance from God in this most important matter—the selection of the first companions of his labours. He felt that the missionaries should be not only men of action, but men of prayer, in order to walk worthily in the footsteps of the Apostles, and gain souls to Jesus Christ. He felt that, if the missionaries were to sanctify themselves whilst working for others, the exhaustive labours of the missionary life should be preceded and followed by fitting intervals of community life, with its circle of religious exercises, its practice of obedience and humility, and its opportunities for sacred studies and quiet reflection. His first aim was to bring around him men gifted with a spirit of interior piety—lovers of solitude and retirement, but ready, for the good of souls, to go forth at the call of obedience into the midst of the crowd, yea, to the ends of the earth, if the saving of souls demanded it. He had not much difficulty in bringing to his side some helpers in his missionary works ; but he had not yet found

that man of God who would be his second self in the foundation of the work to which the Divine spirit was leading him. God is not slow in seconding the designs of those who labour with a pure intention for His glory. At that time, the recollection of a young priest, the Abbé Tempier, with whom Father de Mazenod had formed an acquaintance when both were pursuing their studies at St. Sulpice, and whom he esteemed very much for his great piety, rare prudence, learning, modesty, and spirit of regularity, came vividly before his mind. An interior voice seemed to say to his soul: "This is he after whom you have been seeking as the associate of your undertaking." Presently, after an invocation of the Holy Spirit, he sat down and wrote to the Abbé Tempier the following impressive and beautiful letter:—

"AIX, *October 9, 1815.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Read this letter at the foot of your Crucifix, with the intention of listening to the voice of God alone, and of considering only what the interests of His glory, and the salvation of souls, demand of you. Impose silence in your soul on all cravings of the natural man for the goods of this life; renounce all seeking for your own ease and convenience; reflect seriously on the spiritual destitution of our poor, especially in rural districts; consider how great the number of those is, who have already fallen away from the faith, and what multitudes are now exposed to a like danger. Irreligion and apostasy are making a frightful havoc of souls in our midst, and little is being done to hinder the progress of such evils. Question your own heart, and ask yourself what sacrifice are you prepared to make, in order to take your part in the remedying of these disasters, and then answer my letter without delay.

"In truth, my dear friend, and I will speak to you plainly, you are necessary for the work which I feel the Lord has inspired me to undertake. The Head of the Church is firmly of the opinion, that in the present deplorable state of France, missions alone can bring the people back to the faith which they have actually abandoned.

And the views of the Supreme Pastor are fully borne out by all that we know of the spiritual desolation of different dioceses. I am profoundly convinced, that in missions lies the remedy for this deplorable state of things. Full of this conviction, and placing entire reliance on God, I have undertaken to found in this diocese a house of missionaries, who, giving the example of a truly sacerdotal spirit, will endeavour unceasingly to destroy the empire of Satan, and draw souls to God, by their labours amongst the poor, especially in rural districts. We shall live together in a house which I have purchased, according to a rule which we shall unanimously adopt. We shall be happy in this holy society, which will have but one heart and one soul. One part of the year will be employed in the conversion of souls, and the other in retreat, study, and our own sanctification. I shall say no more to you about it just now. This is enough to give you a foretaste of the spiritual pleasures we shall enjoy together. If, as I hope, you will become one of us, you will not find yourself in an unknown land. You will have four companions. As yet we are not more numerous, for we wish to choose men who have the will and the courage to tread in the footsteps of the Apostles. We must begin by laying solid foundations. We must introduce and establish the greatest regularity in the house, as soon as we enter it ourselves. And this is the precise reason why you are so necessary for me, for I know you have the courage to embrace, and the steadfastness to follow out, a life of strict religious observance. When I receive your reply, I will give you all the details you may wish for. But in the meantime, my dear friend, I would entreat you not to hesitate about taking part in this good work, which is one of the greatest we could undertake for the interests of God's Holy Church. It will be easy to find somebody to take your place in the post you now occupy. But it is not easy for me to find men who wish to devote and consecrate themselves to the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, without any reward upon earth ; but with the certain prospect before them of much fatigue, and of many of those trials and contradictions which our Lord predicted would be the lot of His true disciples. Your

refusal would be exceedingly detrimental to our rising work. I speak with sincerity and reflection. Your modesty will suffer, but no matter. I will even add, that if I thought it necessary to go to Arles, in order to determine you, I would do so at once. Everything depends upon our beginning well; on our being of one mind, and united in devotedness. With you at my side, this will be possible. Lose no time, then, in sending me an affirmative answer, and I shall be happy.

"Adieu, my beloved Brother."

To the foregoing letter the following reply was forwarded :

"SIR, AND VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"May God be blessed for having inspired you with the design of establishing a house of missionaries, to preach the gospel to the poor, especially to those poor people who, living in remote country districts, are most destitute of spiritual aids. I assure you, my very dear brother, that I completely share your views. Far from needing your pressing entreaties to join in a work so much in harmony with my own wishes, had I been acquainted with your plans, I would have been the first to beg admission into your society. Accept my humble thanks for judging me worthy to be your fellow-labourer in the work of promoting the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. It is true I do not possess the gift of eloquence necessary for a missionary; but *alius sic—alius autem sic*. What I may not be able to effect by eloquent sermons, I will try to make up for by catechetical instructions and familiar discourses, by my labours in the tribunal of penance, and by such humble works of zeal for establishing the reign of Jesus Christ in souls, as may come within my reach. I shall find nothing low or painful in any humble or laborious function of the missionary life. In the meantime, practice will make me more familiar with the duties of the holy ministry than I am at present. Moreover, I clearly see what you wish to find in those you choose as your fellow-labourers. You want priests who, as our Director in the Seminary used to say, 'do not follow the ordinary humdrum of routine'—

priests who are willing to walk in the footsteps of the Apostles, and to labour for the salvation of souls, without excepting any return on this earth, but much toil and hardship. By God's grace, I feel in myself this desire ; or if I feel it not, I eagerly wish to do so. I am sure, with your help, everything will become easy to me ; so you may fully reckon upon my good will and co-operation.

" Good-bye, very dear Brother.

" TEMPIER."

Father de Mazenod wrote again in these terms :—

" May God be blessed, my very dear Brother, for the holy dispositions which He has awakened in your heart. You cannot believe what joy I felt on reading your letter. I opened it with some anxiety, but was soon consoled. I assure you, that I consider it most important for the work of God, that you be one of us. I depend more on you than on myself for the fervour and regularity of a community which, in my ideas and hopes, will imitate the perfection of the first disciples of the Apostles. I rest my hopes more firmly upon that than upon grand sermons. Have grand sermons ever converted anybody ? Oh, how well, with God's blessing, you will perform your part in this important affair ! Why are you not near me, in order that I might press you to my heart ? How sweet are the bonds of perfect charity ! Humble yourself as much as you like, but nevertheless know that you are necessary for the work of the missions. I speak to you before God and with sincerity. If we only wanted to go and preach the word of God in an off-hand way, to go through the country with the view, if you like, of gaining souls to God, but without taking much trouble to become ourselves interior men—truly apostolic men, I think it would not be hard to find some one instead of you. But can you believe that I want people of that stamp ? We must simply be saints ourselves. This word comprises everything. The second reason why I look upon your resolution of joining us as a gift from heaven, is the need we have of a priest who thinks, as you do, regarding the interior of our community. I am so sure we shall

always understand one another, that I am not afraid to make a promise of never thinking differently from you on anything relating to the interior life, and to the obligations of the priestly calling, which are more comprehensive than they are generally supposed to be. We will draw up together, when we meet, our regulations, and take counsel with one another regarding all that God may inspire us to do, for our own sanctification, and the good of our neighbour.

"Good-bye, my very dear and good Brother. I embrace you from my heart, and long for the happy moment of our meeting.

"EUGENE DE MAZENOD."

To this letter the Abbé Tempier wrote the following reply:—

"ARLES, *December 20, 1815.*

"HOLY FRIEND AND TRUE BROTHER,

"I cannot tell you how much you have done for my salvation. You are truly the dearest friend of my heart. I loved you before, and had a special esteem for you; but since you have fixed your eyes upon me with the intention of associating me with yourself, in your apostolic labours, and of making me a sharer in the fruits of holiness, which we shall find in our dear congregation, I have no words to express my sentiments in your regard. May God be praised for all that he has inspired you to do for me. I would beg of you, however, to moderate the too good opinion you have formed of me, and not to think me so necessary for the work you have undertaken, as you are pleased to say I am. You may find yourself disappointed, when you are in a position to form a true judgment of me. You will soon see that if I have a certain amount of good will, I have little else beside. I am determined to leave for Aix on the day after Christmas, with the firm resolution of not returning to Arles.

"Good-bye, my very dear and good Brother, let us pray earnestly to the Lord that He may bless our undertaking, if it be conformable to His will.

"TEMPIER."

On the feast of St. John the Evangelist 1815, Father Tempier arrived in Aix, and became the humble and loving disciple of Father de Mazenod. Their spiritual relationship continued unbroken, unchilled, and unclouded, for a period extending over forty-five years. A few weeks elapsed after the meeting of the two holy friends, before their plans were ripe for execution. They saw one another every day, and, we might add, all day long. They mutually encouraged and comforted each other, and prepared themselves for that great act which, according to God's intention, was to give birth to a new religious family in His Church. Father de Mazenod had already purchased a residence for his future community. It was an old Carmelite Convent, from which the daughters of St. Teresa had been driven forth in the time of the revolution, and which had since then been in secular hands. The Founder of the new society of Missionary priests felt happy in being the instrument, in God's hands, of re-awakening within those holy cloisters the chant of the divine praises, after so many years of sorrowful silence.

On the 25th of January 1816, Father de Mazenod, Father Tempier, Father Mye, and two others, assembled together, for the first time in community, the requisite diocesan sanction being obtained. The new Congregation was then founded. A Superior had to be chosen. His companions at once named Father de Mazenod to that office. In his humility, he refused its title and functions. He suggested that they should spend some days in fasting and praying, and then proceed to the regular nomination of a Superior. This being done, the choice again falling upon him, he at last consented to accept the office of Superior, but with the express condition that he himself might be allowed to practise obedience under the direction of Father Tempier, who indeed was to remain his director all through life, and to attend him on his death-bed.

CHAPTER VIII.

AIMING AT PERFECTION : 1816-18.]

EVERY Christian virtue flourished in the new community, the members of which rivalled one another in the ardent love of God, and in heroic charity for their neighbour. They were all of one mind and one heart. The fragrance of their virtues went abroad, and other disciples came to range themselves under the guidance of Father de Mazenod. He possessed an extraordinary power of moulding souls upon his own type. There was a holy fascination in his manner which few could resist. He had the facility of setting hearts on fire with the purest flames of holy love, simply by his ordinary conversation. This came from his vivid faith. It was his habit to speak of the mysteries of faith, as if they were not mysteries, but things that he saw and touched and handled. The brightness of his faith was ever acting on the tenderness of his heart ; hence the copiousness of his tears at the altar, whilst celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood, or whilst officiating at Exposition or Procession of the Blessed Sacrament. The writer of these lines [Father Cooke] once saw him, when Bishop of Marseilles, in presence of the Blessed Sacrament, kneeling before the high altar of the cathedral of that city ; his face was flushed with emotion, and the great tears chased one another down his venerable cheeks. The occasion was the opening of a novena of prayer for the conversion of England. After the ceremony, I ventured to ask the holy prelate the cause of his emotion. ' My child,' the good bishop replied, ' I could not help weeping when I thought of England, once so Catholic, once an island of saints, but now over-run with all manner of heresies.' These manifestations of vivid

faith, and of piety tender and vehement at the same time, were frequent occurrences in his priestly and episcopal life. Cardinal Giraud, Archbishop of Cambrai, who was a cleric in minor orders at Amiens, when Father de Mazenod was ordained priest in the cathedral of that city, and who, the next morning, served his first Mass, thus describes in a conversation he held with Monseigneur Jeancard, shortly after Monseigneur de Mazenod's death, the impression produced on him by what he witnessed on that occasion : " Father de Mazenod, turning to those who were then present to ask their prayers before beginning his first Mass, was carried away by an outburst of faith and fervour, to utter words that astonished all present, and brought tears to every eye. I never heard such a discourse ; I never witnessed anything like the effect produced by it. The emotion was general, and I was overcome like the others. We were all in tears. His words seemed to raise us out of ourselves, and above things of earth, and to transport us to some region all on fire with the love of God. The furnace of his own loving heart seemed to communicate its flames to our breasts. What lofty ideas of the priesthood, of the sacrifice of the altar, and of the mission upon which he was entering, did he not then impart to us : what eloquence vibrated in his impassioned words ! No, it was not eloquence simply ; it was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that came rushing on as an impetuous torrent, flooding our souls with the love of God. Forty years have since passed away, and the remembrance of that fervid discourse is still fresh within my breast. I shall never forget it." As a priest, Father de Mazenod never administered Baptism without shedding tears, when the moment for conferring that sacrament arrived. Afterwards, as a bishop, in administering the Sacrament of Holy Orders, when the moment came for conferring the priestly character on those who were to be ordained, he found it often impossible to control his sighs and tears, so affected was he by a lively sense of the sublime function he was performing.

There was a startling energy in his utterances when denouncing vice, even in ordinary conversation. Impressed as he habitually was, with a sense of the infinite perfections

of God, he felt in the keenest way any failing in reverence in holy places ; and still more, any grievous violation of God's law that came under his notice. In his sermons there was an absence of empty enthusiasm and effervescence, but there was a earnestness of conviction in every word he said, which kindled, as he went along, into a sort of prophet-like power of speech, which in turn smote with fear, awakened tenderest hope, and excited to a heroic love of God.

He seemed ever to live for those around him, and not for himself merely. The young novice approaching him for the first time, was often amazed to find how quickly he was understood and sympathized with, and how he had found a father's kindly care, and a mother's tender fondness, in his new Superior. This came from a special gift, which the venerable founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate had received from God, to fit him for that patriarchal office which he was to exercise in holy Church, as the founder of a new family of missionaries, who were to go forth to the ends of the earth, bearing the tidings of salvation to many sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death. One day the holy founder expressed himself to the writer thus : " God has conferred on the founders of religious orders special gifts to fit them for their special works. Saint Ignatius, St. Philip Neri, the Blessed Liguori, had each his own peculiar and appropriate gift. The gift, my son, which God I feel has conferred upon me, unworthy though I am to be named with those great servants of His, is that of the love of a mother for her children." But there was no weakness in the tenderness of his love for his spiritual sons. His aim was to make them truly apostolic men, and missionaries of the poor. This end he sought to accomplish first by his own example. In him they saw one who had trampled the world under foot, at a moment when some of its highest dignities and emoluments, and of its most captivating pleasures were within his reach, to give himself to an austere and humble mode of life, and to the work of a laborious and obscure ministry. His fasts were frequent ; several times in the week he used the discipline ; his brief sleep was taken upon a hard bed ; his meals were of the simplest and

most frugal kind. Looking on himself as the servant of the poor, he would imitate the poor, as far as priestly propriety would allow, in the manner of his attire. His cassock was often threadbare, and sometimes patched with his own hands, but always perfectly clean and without a speck.

The length and fervour of his prayers, and his profound and loving reverence when in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, afforded a grand lesson of practical piety to all who had the privilege of dwelling with him under the same roof. The first himself at every spiritual exercise, he stimulated all around him to regularity and fervour in keeping the appointed hours of community worship. His zeal was unbounded for the sanctification of his first companions. Several times every week he addressed spiritual conferences to the members of his new community. He would speak to them, often so as to move them to tears, of the necessity of imitating Jesus Christ in his life of obedience, humility, silence and prayer, in the obscurity of Nazareth, in order afterwards to go forth as his disciples, to save souls with Him.

The holy Founder spared not the reprimand or reproach when he deemed such to be needed. A simple irreverence in the divine worship, some want of punctuality in the performance of religious exercises, or some negligence in keeping the rules of the community, would draw from his lips expressions of reproof so severe and stern, that one would be disposed to tax them with exaggeration, who took not into account the burning zeal of Father de Mazenod for the perfection of those whom God had intrusted to his care. He possessed a marvellous tact in discovering the secret virtues and the hidden weaknesses of his subjects. The latter, with resolute yet gentle hand, he would seek to weed out, in order to give full play to the growth of the former. No amount of good dispositions, or brilliancy of talents, would cause him to shut his eyes to a real defect in a member of his community, no matter what it would cost his own feelings, or what pain it would cause to somebody very dear to him ; he would not rest until the evil was amputated, and the defect torn up by the root.

Two short months of holy community-life had barely elapsed when Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier felt mutually drawn, by the Spirit of God, to perform an act which would bind them still more to the divine service, and place them in a state of holy dependence upon one another. On the night of Holy Thursday 1816, which these two devoted priests spent together in adoration before the Altar of Repose, after hours passed in prayer, each knelt before the other, and pronounced the vow of obedience one to the other. They united this act of self-immolation with the mystery of Calvary, which they were then commemorating. This was an act of private devotion on the part of Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier, of which the other members of the community at Aix were not cognizant.

The first mission given by the newly-formed community of Aix was opened at Grans on February 11, and closed on March 17, 1816. It produced an abundant harvest of souls. For two further years Father de Mazenod, and his little body of missionaries, laboured with extraordinary fatigues, and extraordinary fruits of benediction, in different towns and hamlets of Provence. By 1818 the number in community had already considerably increased. A second house had been founded at Notre Dame du Laus, in the diocese of Gap. Father de Mazenod felt that the time had come to give a more definite form to his work, and to prepare a code of constitutions and rules for the new society. Hitherto he had confined himself to the establishing of general regulations, whilst waiting for the acquiring of further experience, and additional light from God, to complete his work. Now he feels the time has come to put his undertaking into definite shape, and to draw up the final rules for the government and mode of life of the members of his society.

One of the family estates of Father de Mazenod was St. Laurent du Verdon, at a hamlet in the department of the Lower Alps, and not many miles from Digne. On it stood an ancient château, the favourite resort of the de Mazenods in former times, when they sought repose from official labours in the silent woods in which it was embedded, and amidst the noble mountain scenery by which it was

surrounded. It was to this spot, so favorable to quiet contemplation, that Father de Mazenod retired to draw up the constitutions and rules of his new institute. He sought for a spot where he could reflect and pray much, without being distracted by missionary works or the concourse of visitors, whilst occupied with the important task he had laid before himself. His companions were Father Moreau, and Brother Suzanne, not yet a priest. His venerable mother, knowing for what object her pious son was going to St. Laurent begged that she also might be allowed to accompany him. This truly Christian mother deserves a special notice in this biographical sketch. The great virtues of Eugene de Mazenod, which ripened with his years into heroic deeds, were in a large measure, under God, the result of her training and of her example. Instead of throwing obstacles in the way of her son's vocation, as too many weak-minded and selfish mothers in similar cases would have done, she did everything she could to aid and encourage him in accomplishing the sacrifice which God demanded of him. He revered her, not merely as his mother, but as a great servant of God, and sought her counsel and her prayers somewhat as we may believe St. Augustine did those of St. Monica. Madame de Mazenod took with her, as a companion on that occasion, an aged lady friend—the Marquise de Requesse.

The château became for the time a holy solitude. Its inmates held no communication with the external world : no visits were made or received. A rule of life drawn up by Father de Mazenod was strictly followed by all. At an early hour, all rose and engaged in mental prayer, in the private oratory. A great part of the day was given to silence and private devotion. Everybody seemed anxious to draw down, by fervent and prolonged prayers, the blessings of the Holy Spirit on the work of Father de Mazenod. The venerable founder himself redoubled his prayers and austerities for the same object. Several weeks were thus spent in drawing up the code of rules and constitutions of his new congregation. Page after page of this holy volume was written by him on his knees, with his missionary cross placed before him, to serve, no doubt,

as his source of inspiration, and to suggest to him the framing of such laws for the spiritual government of the members of his society, as would bring their lives most into conformity with the image of Christ Jesus crucified, and would help them to imitate this divine model in labouring for the salvation of souls.

In the opening pages of the first chapter he treats of the ends of the society, which he declares to be the evangelizing of the poor ; the direction of seminaries for the training of young ecclesiastics, and in general the guidance of the young in the ways of piety ; and the giving of retreats to the clergy and laity, in the houses of the society, or elsewhere. In the second chapter he lays down regulations for the giving of missions, which he declares to be the chief means by which the society is to accomplish its end of evangelizing the poor. In the third chapter he enters minutely into the mode of government and the order of discipline, in the theological seminaries under the care of the Fathers. In the fourth chapter he treats of preaching and of the administering of the sacraments ; the direction of youths ; visiting prisons ; assisting the dying ; the canonical hours ; and the public spiritual exercises to be held during the year in the churches of the society. In the second section, chapter the first, he treats of the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and perseverance. In the second chapter of the same section, he lays down rules for the observance of silence and interior recollection, for the proper distribution of the devotional exercises of the community, and also for the practice of mortification, and for the community meetings and conferences. In the third chapter of this section, he speaks of the virtues which the members of the society should chiefly practise, such as charity, humility, and renouncement. He speaks also of the reception of the sacraments and spiritual direction, of the food and raiment of the members of the society, of intercourse with the neighbour, and of journeys. In the fourth chapter, second section, he lays down rules for the care of the sick members of the society, for the assistance of the dying, and for suffrages for the dead. In the third section he treats of the government of the society. There

are special paragraphs in this section on the General Chapter, the Superior-General, the Assistants, Provincials, and Local Superiors ; also on the noviceship ; on the qualities candidates should have, to be admitted to the noviciate, and on the reception of lay-brothers.

This rapid analysis of the rules of the society of the Oblates of Mary, will serve at least to make manifest the character of the work undertaken by its holy founder. His first aim was to provide for the sanctification of its members ; that they, being made holy themselves, might the more efficaciously labour for the sanctification of many. No great austerity is imposed by the letter of these rules ; at the same time, their spirit, if thoroughly imbibed, will lead to the crucifixion of the carnal man, and to a close imitation of the penitential life of the servants of God in all ages. Prayer, study, labour, the love of Jesus Christ, and tender devotion to His Blessed Mother, are the *norma* of the life of the true Oblate of Mary Immaculate. Such was the ideal which rose, in the vision of his prayer, to the mind of this new law-maker, whom the Spirit of God led up as if to the summit of another Sinai, there to reveal to him the precepts of holiness, which he was to deliver to the little band of chosen souls who had followed him from Egypt into the desert.

CHAPTER IX.

OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE : 1818-26.

FATHER DE MAZENOD having completed the work which he undertook in seeking the solitude of St. Laurent du Verdon, returned to his community at Aix, bearing with him the precious fruits of his reflection and prayer, in the code of rules which he had completed. During the annual retreat, which was to close on the Feast of All Saints 1818, he communicated these rules to his community. Every day during the retreat he read a portion, and delivered, in burning words, a commentary which wonderfully moved the hearts of his devout hearers to receive them and observe them. Self-immolation was the theme of those glowing improvisations. He showed them how the faithful observance of the rules of life he proposed to them, led to a mystical death, a death to self and the world. He urged them to become voluntary victims and to make of themselves holocausts on the altar of God's holy will. A common desire sprang up within their hearts in listening to the words of their still youthful, though, by virtue, most venerable Superior. It was that of dying with him to the world, by the perpetual consecration of themselves to God. "*Eamus et nos ut moriamur cum eo,*" "Let us also go that we may die with him," was the sentiment of their loving devotedness at the close of the retreat.

On the morning of the Feast of All Saints, the 1st of November 1818, the whole community assisted at the Mass of the Superior-General. Before beginning Mass, he addressed to the community a fervent exhortation. He then made known that he had the sanction of the Vicars-Capitular of the diocese of Aix to receive their vows. Prostrating himself before the Blessed Sacrament. he

pronounced aloud the formula of his own vows. Father Tempier then pronounced his vows, as also did Fathers Mye, Moreau, and Maunier, and three scholastics. Another important layer had now been solidly placed on the foundations of the new society, and we shall see rise up tier upon tier, until the summit of the edifice will be crowned by the hand of Peter with its finishing stone.

A few days after the solemn ceremony of public pronouncing of vows by the community, the work of the missions was recommenced with new ardour. "The Missionaries of Provence," as they were still called, headed by their devoted Superior, Father de Mazenod, went from town to town, and from village to village, through many dioceses in the South of France, sowing the seed of the divine word, and always seeking, by preference, those places where the poor most abounded, and where souls were in the greatest spiritual destitution. In the year 1820 a great mission was opened at Marseilles. This mission was conducted by two bodies of missionaries, the "Missionaries of France," of whom M. de Forbin-Janson, afterwards Bishop of Nancy, was Superior; and the "Missionaries of Provence," under Father de Mazenod. The evangelizing of the most crowded and the poorest parishes of Marseilles fell, to his great gratification, to the share of Father de Mazenod and his missionaries. As the Provençal was the popular language of Marseilles, Father de Mazenod delivered all his discourses in that language, of which he was perfect master. He gained complete sway over the fiery and turbulent masses he had undertaken to evangelize. They became tractable as children under his guidance; ancient feuds were forgotten; multitudes of men, who had spent the greater part of their lives in the camp or on the battle field, and who had never once for years thought of God, were awakened from their torpor by the inspired preaching of Father de Mazenod and his companions. During the mission, the news arrived in Marseilles of the assassination of the Duc de Berry. The inhabitants of the parishes evangelized by Father de Mazenod were intensely royalist, and a popular outbreak was dreaded on their part; but his influence was successful

in calming them down. The labours of the Missionaries of France were also very successful. The mission closed with the planting of the mission cross: forty thousand persons walked in procession at the ceremony, and Father de Mazenod preached in Provençal at its close, from a platform erected on the spot where the cross was to be planted. This was the centre of the district which he and his brethren had been evangelizing. The pious enthusiasm of this vast multitude could not be restrained, even by the solemnity of the occasion, from manifesting itself by loud demonstrations, so moved were all hearts by the kindling and holy eloquence of the preacher. The cross, which was then planted, stands erect to this day, and it has become a place of holy pilgrimage. Shortly after the mission, the first house of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate at Marseilles was opened, and the site selected for this new establishment was very appropriate, for the mission cross stands in the front of their house and church on the *Place du Calvaire*.

The mission of Marseilles was followed soon by another great mission by Father de Mazenod, in the cathedral of Aix, with similar success. His labours during the mission seemed superhuman, but the ardour of his zeal for souls sweetened every fatigue and privation that he had to endure in their behalf. Ten years of active missionary life had now elapsed. During this period new recruits offered their services to Father de Mazenod, to be incorporated in his devoted little army of missionaries. During a mission, given by him and Father Suzanne, of holy memory, at Nice, a learned Professor of the Diocesan Seminary of that city, Don Carlo Albini, offered himself as a postulant. Father Albini bore already a reputation of extraordinary sanctity. He had been for a long time secretly sighing for an opportunity of embracing community life, in some society dedicated to the conversion of sinners and the service of the poor. Having an opportunity of studying closely Father de Mazenod and his companions, whilst helping them in hearing confessions during the mission, it seemed to him that he had found all that he had been wishing for so long. He was profoundly edified by the holy bearing and the apostolic zeal of these servants of God, and he resolved to seek

admission into their ranks. At first, his bishop was greatly opposed to his design, but afterwards he consented to the sacrifice, hoping to have, one day, a foundation of the missionaries in his diocese. Without suffering any delay to intervene, Father Albini prepared to follow the divine call; so dead was he to the world, that he came away without visiting his native home, which was within a few miles of Nice, and during the twenty years that he lived as an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, he never sought the consolation of a visit to his early friends. He always endeavoured to conceal his great sanctity under the veil of profound humility; but, with all his efforts, he could not hide it. At missions and elsewhere, when people did not know his name, and wished to speak of him, they designated him by the title of "the saint." He died in the odour of sanctity in 1839, and miracles are reported to have been worked at his grave.

Shortly after Father Albini joined the new society, a young ecclesiastical student offered himself as a postulant. His name was Guibert. The experienced eye of the holy Superior quickly discovered in his new postulant, signs of a marked vocation, and he admitted him to the noviciate without hesitation. Brother Guibert was destined to become one of the lights of the new congregation of missionaries. After his ordination to the priesthood, he was engaged for a while in giving missions. Afterwards, his rare prudence, great piety, and his disciplinary spirit, marked him out as one eminently fitted for the important office of master of novices. Later on he was appointed Superior of the Diocesan Ecclesiastical Seminary founded in Ajaccio, by the Oblates of Mary, for the education of the young clergy of Corsica, and which remained under their direction until the passing of the French laws against religious orders in the early years of the twentieth century. Father Guibert was afterwards named Bishop of Viviers, and then Archbishop of Tours, and he died Cardinal Archbishop of Paris in 1886. Amidst all his honours, that holy prelate ever remained the humble religious, glorying in his title of Oblate of Mary Immaculate.

The ranks of the new society being considerably increased,

and fortified by the accession of such subjects as Fathers Albini and Guibert, and many others of the same saintly type, an interior voice seemed to say to Father de Mazenod, that the time had come for launching out the little bark, of which he was the pilot, into deeper waters, and that he should seek a place for his new society among the recognized religious bodies in the church, by obtaining the approbation of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. The humility of the holy priest shrank from the idea of putting himself forward as the founder of a new religious congregation, and, for a time, he could not bring himself to entertain it. At last he yielded to the pressing solicitations of the members of his community, and especially to the counsel of Father Albini, whom he revered as one full of the Spirit of God, and he resolved to seek the formal approbation of the Holy See for the rules and constitutions of his society. In an affair of such importance, he felt the need of bringing into play all the agencies which holy prudence might suggest, and his spirit of lively faith disclose. He took counsel on the matter with several learned and holy men, but, above all, he consulted God in prayer. He had prayers said for the success of his undertaking, not only in the communities under his own jurisdiction, but in the religious houses in which he had influence, and these were many. At Marseilles the Capuchin Sisters and the Poor Clares, communities in which there were then many living saints, made frequent offerings of their prayers and penances to obtain the divine blessing on his undertaking. Aided by such supernatural helps, and furnished with letters of highest recommendation given by various bishops in whose dioceses he and his missionaries had laboured, he left Marseilles for Rome on the 1st November 1825.

We give here some extracts from his letters to Father Tempier, and others.

“ ROME, *November 26, 1825*

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I reached Rome to-day at too late an hour, unhappily, to say Mass; though I remained fasting until past two o'clock for that purpose. On leaving Genoa, I had for

companions Father Pizzi, a Jesuit ; a Trappist Father ; four Carmelite Fathers, and a secular priest from Sardinia. You see that I was in very good company. By common consent we organized, in starting, a community method of life for our journey. In the morning between three and four we made our meditation for an hour. After that we tried to sleep for awhile. When we had sufficient daylight to be able to read, we recited together the Rosary, and afterwards the little hours of the divine office. When the diligence stopped at breakfast time, I hastened to the nearest church, and said Mass, at which my companions assisted. During the day, at intervals, I read aloud passages from the Imitation of Christ. We said the Rosary together, and in the afternoon we recited vespers and compline. Our conversation was always on edifying subjects."

" ROME, *December 6, 1825.*

" MY DEAR FATHER COURTES,

" I write to you from the capital of the Christian world. This beautiful city of Rome deserves well that title, for it is the See of the Vicar of Christ, and in some manner a compendium of Christianity. Here alone, it seems to me is understood what sort of dwelling man should prepare for his God upon the earth. No idea can be formed by one who has not been here, of the magnificence which reveals itself at every step, in the holy temples you meet as you go along. Sometimes you meet five or six churches clustered in the same vicinity, each rivalling the others in splendour, and surpassing them by some special beauty of its own. Here one can form an idea of how, when in heaven, we shall never tire of giving praise to God, or lessen in love as we contemplate His infinite perfections, when we find that the sight of those beautiful productions of human skill—the works of the feeble hands of men—excites an admiration that continues to grow as we gaze. And what a stimulant to piety is furnished to us by the sight of those many monuments that attest the victories won by those martyrs who drowned idolatry in their blood. Their bodies are here, and their memories are as fresh to-day, after the lapse of

seventeen or eighteen centuries, as if they had been lately in our midst. These centuries have swallowed up their persecutors, and destroyed their works, which they had flattered themselves would be eternal. Here everything is holy for him who comes hither in the spirit of a true pilgrim. For my own part, I only see here the Apostles, and Martyrs, and Confessors of all ages. You cannot take a step in Rome without coming upon some monument of faith and piety."

"ROME, *December 9, 1825.*

"I cannot accustom myself, my dear Father Tempier, to a separation from those I love; I have no joy apart from them. Oh, how great shall our happiness in heaven be! There we shall abide in loving society with one another, and shall not be obliged to travel into distances away from our friends. And though we shall all there be completely absorbed in God, nevertheless we shall be free to love one another with intense mutual love. The intuitive vision of God did not prevent Jesus Christ from loving men, and among men, some more than others. There are certain over-refined mystics who deny this, and who would force upon us another nature, inferior to that which God has given to us. In my own case, I cannot be fully happy whilst separated from the members of my community, whom I love so tenderly. . . I have not yet seen the Holy Father. Cardinal de Gregorio, to whom I have been warmly recommended from Turin, and who has received me with great kindness, gives it as his positive opinion that the Pope will not grant his solemn approbation to our Rules. The Holy Father may possibly, he thinks, give an indirect approbation to our work, by expressing some words of praise in our behalf, and by granting us certain privileges and indulgences. I say Mass during this Octave of the Blessed Virgin, to obtain from God the favours we are seeking for. I do not neglect, at the same time, the human means which I think needful to employ. If in the end I do not succeed, I shall have nothing to reproach myself with."

The 20th of December, the Vigil of the Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, was the day appointed for his audience

with the Holy Father. The morning of that day he visited the tomb of St. Peter in the crypt of the Vatican, and placed the manuscript of the rules and constitutions of his new institute on the altar over the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles. He wept copiously on that occasion, and prayed with great fervour, invoking the intercession of that blessed apostle, whom Jesus Christ had appointed to be head of His church. He then celebrated the holy Mass, being in tears all the time. At the appointed hour he repaired to the palace of the Pope. The Holy Father was prepossessed in his favour by the reports which had reached him of his virtues and labours. As he entered the audience chamber, his first appearance produced a most favourable impression on the mind and heart of the holy Pontiff. His noble bearing, blended with an expression of the most profound humility and loving reverence for the Vicar of Jesus Christ, was judged by the Holy Father to be a faithful revelation of his inner spirit. Kneeling beside the holy Pontiff, he exposed the object of his visit to Rome. For three quarters of an hour he had the privilege allowed to him of developing the nature of the work he had undertaken for the saving of perishing souls. The holy Pope was deeply moved as he heard of the good already accomplished by the members of this new Society of Missionaries. He seemed much impressed with the practical character of the project presented to him, and evidently looked on Father de Mazenod as one raised by God to do great work in his day, for the interests of the holy Church. At the conclusion of the audience, the Holy Father appeared to be much affected by what he had been listening to. Lifting his eyes to heaven, he clasped his hands together, and bent his head for some moments in earnest prayer. He then entered into familiar conversation with Father de Mazenod about his project, and became its warm advocate. He instructed him in detail as to the steps he should take to obtain the approbation and confirmation of the rules and constitutions of his society. "In the first place," his Holiness said, "the secretary of the Congregation will present a report to me on the subject. I will then appoint a Cardinal to examine it, who will present his report to the

Congregation. After that each Cardinal gives his vote. The number of applications which come to us, especially from France, compels us to adopt a special mode of procedure which consists in giving praise and encouragement to the new Institutes, without however granting them a formal approbation." Father de Mazenod hesitated not to say to his Holiness that it was the formal approbation of the Holy See which he was then seeking to obtain for his new congregation. The condescension of the Sovereign Pontiff on this occasion was something remarkable. He seemed from that hour resolved that no time should be lost in raising the new congregation of Father de Mazenod to the rank of the canonically appointed religious bodies of the Church of Christ. Was he moved by some supernatural power to this condescending patronage of an infant work? Leo XII was a man of God, who looked with an eye of more than human penetration into the future. Had his Holiness then some foresight or presentiment of the work which was to be done for God by this new congregation, once that the blessing of Peter, as a baptism of the Holy Spirit, had descended upon it, and that a new name had been given to it at that baptism—that of the "Society of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate"? Did he see, in mental glance, at that hour, the future sons of this new congregation going forth to reap the ripened harvest of souls, not only under the sunny skies of France, but also in the lands of Saxon and of Celt; yea, traversing earth and ocean in search of other harvest-fields, in regions never trodden by civilized foot, amidst the glaciers of Arctic forests, or amidst the burning sands of African wilds? Certain it is that it was no common cause that led the Vicar of Jesus Christ to depart from the ordinary reserve with which the Sovereign Pontiff deals with new projects, even when proposed by Saints, some of whom spent many years in obtaining, for orders founded by them, an approbation similar to that granted almost at the first audience by Leo XII to Father de Mazenod. The Holy Father, in his evident zeal to promote Father de Mazenod's undertaking, gave him precise instructions as to the first steps he should take to advance his work. "Go," he said, "to Archpriest

Adinolfi, the secretary of the Congregation, and tell him in my name to present his report to me on Friday next, the day of his audience." Fearing that Father de Mazenod might forget the name or address of the Archpriest, his Holiness rose and took from his desk a sheet of paper and a pen, and placed them before Father de Mazenod, dictating what he was to write.

The following day, Father de Mazenod presented himself to the Archpriest, and informed him of his Holiness's wishes on the subject of the report he would have him prepare on the rules and constitutions of the society of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The Archpriest, who gave a most gracious reception to his visitor, bade him, however, not expect a formal approbation of his society, and said that the most he could look forward to, would be a declaration that the rules of his institute were worthy of praise,—*laudandae*. "This manner of proceeding is," he said, "in accordance with the custom now established in dealing with new institutes, and it is the view which I will support." These words of the secretary of the Congregation were a blow to the hopes of Father de Mazenod, and threw his mind, for a moment, into a state of much perplexity. The thought presented itself forcibly to him of abandoning all further attempts to obtain the formal approbation of the Holy See for his society, and of returning to France. But, on reflection, he dismissed this thought, feeling that he was bound, through respect for the Holy Father, to pursue, to the end, the negotiations with the Archpriest, which he had entered upon under the direction of his Holiness. In withdrawing from the Archpriest, he said, "I leave this affair in your hands, and I seek for nothing else but that God's design may be accomplished."

We will give an extract from a letter written about this time, by the venerable Superior-General to Father Tempier, in which he touchingly narrates the circumstances of this eventful period in the history of his society. It will serve to give us an insight into that spirit of lively faith, and entire dependence upon God, which was habitual to him, especially when anything great or difficult had to be accomplished by him for the divine glory.

“ I continued to recommend the affair to God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, and of the Angels and Saints, and, in a spirit of entire abandonment of my project to His holy providence, I awaited the issue of the Archpriest’s audience with the Holy Father, whatever it might be. At the hour when I supposed the audience was taking place, I addressed myself to God in prayer ; not that I thought that my poor prayers could accomplish what I desired, but it seemed fitting that I should remain in our Lord’s presence, notwithstanding my unworthiness, at a moment when divine grace was operating, and the Holy Spirit was guiding the Head of the Church in a matter which concerned the existence of our society, and the salvation of countless souls. This morning, according to appointment, I visited again the Archpriest to ascertain the result of his audience with the Holy Father, which took place yesterday. He first read to me the report which he had presented to his Holiness, which concluded, as he had said already it would, with a recommendation to his Holiness that our society should be pronounced praiseworthy (*laudanda*), simply. But mark the goodness of God, and give thanks with me to Him, without ceasing. The Holy Father’s views were other than those of the report presented to him. ‘ No,’ said the Sovereign Pontiff, “ this society pleases me ; I know the good it is doing.’ He then entered into a number of details concerning the society, which astonished very much the Archpriest. ‘ I wish,’ his Holiness continued, ‘ to favour it. Choose a Cardinal amongst the most kindly disposed in the Sacred Congregation, to be the promoter of this cause. Go to him in my name ; tell him that it is my intention that these rules be not simply approved, but that they be formally confirmed ! ’ O Leo XII ! you will always be regarded as the Benefactor and the Father of our society. In leaving the house of the Archpriest Adinolfi, I said a *Te Deum*, and I entered a church, where reposes the body of St. Joseph Calasanctius, to give thanks to our Lord, and to beg of Him to complete the work which He had begun. Let all the brethren of our community increase their fervour in the punctual observance of our rules. You must feel that to-day

they become invested with a more solemn character. Let us accomplish all that the Head of the Church expects of us. This will be the means of drawing down new blessings from Heaven upon ourselves and our ministry. Let us especially increase in devotion to the Blessed Virgin, in order that we may be worthy to be named Oblates of Mary Immaculate. This name is a passport to Heaven. How is it we did not think of it before? How consoling and glorious for us to be dedicated to her, and to bear her name, 'Oblates of Mary Immaculate!' How grateful is this name to the ear, and how soothing to the heart! Let us rejoice in it, and bear her name and her livery."

In the lives of all who do great works for God, we find alternate hopes and fears. If coming success shines without a cloud to-day, to-morrow the sky may become overcast and menacing, and signs of success may disappear. God permits this for the greater merit of His servants, and to give them an opportunity of putting forth an increase of faith and love and confidence. He also thus provides an opportunity for Himself of making manifest His providential care and Fatherly love, by coming to their aid in critical and decisive moments when all other helps fail. Great works, undertaken for God and for the good of souls, have a manner of their own of reaching the goal of success. They seem often to fail, when all the while they are in reality advancing. In the meantime, those who are engaged in carrying them on come in for their meed of censure and dispraise, much to their soul's profit. And, like the incoming tide, against which the hurricane rages, which on its surface shows countless receding waves, whilst it is steadily and irresistibly advancing; so with the progress of many a work, undertaken for God's glory, in the development of which superficial failures often cover the deep and irresistible under-current of supernatural success. Father de Mazenod's undertaking is not to form an exception to the ordinary rule concerning great works set on foot by God's servants for the promotion of the divine glory. It has to pass through the crucible of a great and unexpected opposition. Letter after letter came from

influential personages in France, addressed to the Holy See with the intention of preventing the confirmation and approbation of his Institute. Those whom he had been looking upon as the warm advocates of his undertaking suddenly, without any seeming reason, became its bitter opponents. In the midst of this storm of opposition, his soul remained calm and full of a child-like trust in God. His manner of acting on this critical occasion affords matter of deep instruction for all who labour under great opposition in carrying on works undertaken for God's glory and the interests of souls. He felt, at such a time, more than ever bound to avoid the least voluntary fault which might render him, in any manner, less worthy of the aid of that special Providence to which he had been looking for success. He thus unbosoms himself in a letter, written at this period, to Father Tempier, his *alter ego*, to whom, as his spiritual guide, he was in the habit of opening the innermost recesses of his heart :—

“ Having in my hands an affair of such importance, the result of which may prove of the greatest consequence to the interests of Holy Church, the glory of God, and the sanctification of souls—an affair which is sure to stir up against it the malice of demons, and which cannot succeed except through the very special protection of God, to whom it belongs to touch the hearts and guide the wills of men, I must necessarily feel convinced that it is my duty to do all that depends on me to live in the most intimate possible union with God, and to form the resolution of avoiding every fault, however slight, which would grieve His Holy Spirit. In the present position of affairs, the least voluntary transgression would appear to me a crime, not only because of its displeasing God, which would be its chief evil, but also because of the consequences which might follow in its train. Ever since I left France, and especially since I arrived in Rome, God has assisted me in all things, in a manner so sensible, that it seems to me that I could not, if I tried, cease to experience a loving gratitude which leads me to praise, to bless and to give thanks to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and, in due proportion, to the Blessed

Virgin, and to the Angels, and to the Saints, to whom I feel indebted for that protection and consolation which I experience. With all that, I find matter for self-reproach, and for humbling myself before God in my confession, which I make twice a week."

In a subsequent letter addressed to the same Father, he writes thus :—

" To-day I visited again the tomb of the Apostles, there to imbibe fresh spiritual strength, and to implore further help from Heaven. For the third time, I have said Mass at the Confession of St. Peter. I must acknowledge that God, in His great goodness, has, by the consolation of His grace, more than made up for all the troubles that the malice of Hell has excited against us. I have invoked Him with all the fervour of my heart, and He has shown Himself to be a true protector. I availed myself of that occasion to recommend you all most earnestly to God. I asked for you an ample participation in the virtues and merits of that great apostle. One prays with confidence, I can assure you, when one finds one's self with Jesus and His Vicar, and the Apostles and Martyrs. In offering the Holy Mass on altars, under which repose bodies that once were animated with such great souls, and which in life had been in contact with our Blessed Saviour Himself, one's own soul readily catches the flames of that sacred fire of love which glowed within their breasts, when they confessed, by their sufferings and death, the name of their Master and ours. Let us continue to pray, my dear friend, and let us not cease to place all our confidence in God. To Him alone it belongs to rule and dispose all things according to His infinite wisdom and to the greater glory of His Holy name. I must confess that never in my life did I understand and feel, as I now do, the value of an unreserved abandonment of one's self into God's hands. I rejoice now at not having omitted anything which might render this virtue familiar to me. The practice of this holy abandonment into God's hands does not, however, prevent me from asking earnestly certain special favours from Him ; on the contrary, when we abandon ourselves to God, we pray with greater

confidence and with an almost perfect assurance of our prayer being heard. I have told you, already, that, since my arrival in Rome, I offer the Holy Mass every day for the success of our undertaking. I never kneel before our Lord, in the Blessed Sacrament, without placing my petitions at His feet. I never invoke a saint without asking him to become our intercessor in this matter. At the same time, I do not omit to employ such lawful and profitable means as human prudence may suggest, to secure a favourable issue for our cause. I do not spare my feet in journeying hither and thither. I willingly sacrifice my repose of mind in furthering what I believe to be the designs of God's Holy Providence. Till now everything has succeeded beyond my expectations: God has, however, allowed certain drawbacks and disappointments to occur, thus leaving room for some anxieties; but He has not permitted my confidence in Him to diminish. On the contrary, it is in times of greatest interior trial that my prayer assumes its most tender and confiding tone, and addresses itself to God in words fond and familiar as those of a child speaking to a father. As I pass in review, before my mind, the progress, from stage to stage, of this affair, I feel myself carried away by sentiments of admiration of God's goodness, whose loving hand is so visible in the whole matter."

At length the great undertaking of Father de Mazenod reached the crowning point of success. The benediction, which was upon it from the outset, bore it safely through the host of difficulties which beset its progress. On the 16th of February, 1826, Father de Mazenod communicated the following joyful news to Father Tempier:—"The Congregation of Cardinals, presided over by Cardinal Pacca, has unanimously approved of our rules, and has petitioned the Holy Father to give his supreme sanction to them in due canonical form."

Full of a sense of the immense debt of gratitude he owed to God, to whom alone he attributed the success of his undertaking, he thus writes to his friend:—

"Take measures to obtain prayers of thanksgiving on the part of all those devout friends to whom, in your prudence,

you have communicated the good news I have forwarded to you. We must acknowledge that the ways of Divine Providence, in this affair, have been wonderful. God has shewn Himself, in this matter, to be indeed the Ruler of the hearts of men. It was He who inspired those with whom I came into contact, whilst carrying it on, with favourable dispositions in my regard. I felt all the while that He was leading me by the hand, and that His light was guiding my steps. This gave me such an absolute and filial confidence, that I spoke to Our Lord, in prayer, as I believe I would have done if I had the happiness of conversing with Him when He was on earth."

On the following day, the 17th of February 1826, the Holy Father, Leo XII, confirmed the decision of the Congregation of Cardinals, and gave his solemn approbation to the Institute, to the Rules and Constitutions of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Writing after this event to Father Tempier, the holy Founder having first expressed his thankfulness to God, says:—

"Henceforward it will be our duty to labour with a new ardour, and a more entire devotedness, in increasing the Divine glory by gaining souls to God. From this hour we should observe our rules with more loving exactitude and reverence than before. They have now, after a most minute examination, received the solemn approbation of the Church. They are declared to be holy and eminently fitted to guide those who embrace them to the sublime end of Christian and religious perfection. They have now become the common property of God's Church. The Vicar of Christ stands guarantee for them. He whom God employed to prepare them from this day disappears. He was only the exterior instrument which the hand of God deigned to employ to make manifest the way of perfection to chosen souls, called by Him from the beginning to take part in this work of mercy, and to become incorporated in this new and humble society. Our members, as yet, are not many; but our society has already an existence as real as that of any of the most ancient and venerable Religious Institutes

of the Church of God. Let us acknowledge, with gratitude, the dignity conferred upon the society, our Mother, who has been raised to the rank of a Queen, and enthroned in the house of the Heavenly Bridegroom, to become the fruitful parent of a numerous offspring, in case we prove faithful to our calling, but otherwise to be smitten with barrenness. Let us therefore resolve upon becoming saints, in order to be worthy of such a Mother."

CHAPTER X.

BISHOP OF MARSEILLES : 1837.

THE new society of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate was ushered into existence at a time when France, and it may be said Europe, was but slowly recovering from the shock of the great Revolution. The atmosphere was still laden with explosive elements, and new revolutions were brewing in the air. It was a time highly unfavourable to the growth and development of a new religious order. But God, who provides shelter for the young birds of the air amidst the storms of early spring-tide, was not to leave unsheltered a work which, from its earliest days, exhibited such signs of being born of Him. His loving providence was to raise up for its protection a friend and a father in the person of a saintly prelate, the uncle of Father de Mazenod—Monseigneur Fortuné de Mazenod.

The See of Marseilles was the first in France, it is supposed, to receive the Christian faith. On the shores of Marseilles, according to a venerable tradition, arrived Martha, Mary Magdalen, and Lazarus, whom Our Lord had raised from the dead, having been borne thither, providentially, in an open boat, in which they had been purposely sent out to sea to perish. Lazarus (says the ancient tradition) became the first Bishop of Marseilles. Many of his successors in that See were illustrious saints in God's church. Among them stand out prominently the names of Theodore and Serenus. The glories of this ancient See shone forth with new splendour from the middle to to the close of the eighteenth century in the person of the illustrious de Belsunce, and his successor, Monseigneur Belloy. According to the terms of the Concordat between Pius VII and the First Consul, Napoleon, new limits were to

be assigned to the dioceses of France, and several dioceses became altogether extinct. The diocese of Marseilles was included in this latter category. In 1817 it was restored to its former diocesan rank, and Monseigneur Fortuné de Mazenod was named its first Bishop after the Restoration. This holy prelate, who was already advanced in years before his nomination, had to wait for six years before he could take possession of his diocese. At last, all obstacles being removed, he was enthroned Bishop of Marseilles. In accepting the heavy burden of his charge, he stipulated that his nephew should be named his Vicar-General. This latter office opened a wide field for the large administrative qualities and boundless zeal of Father de Mazenod. Whilst occupied with the affairs of a great diocese, he forgot not that his chief responsibility lay in the government of his Society of Missionaries. His character of Missionary and Religious was never hidden behind any of those dignities of the sanctuary which were forced upon him, and which in obedience he accepted. The Bishop of Marseilles was, as might be expected, the warm friend and patron of the society founded by his holy nephew. He gladly availed himself of the services of the Oblate Fathers in the evangelizing of his diocese. The prisons of Marseilles were thrown open to their missionary zeal. The training of the young clergy was also confided to them.

For thirty-three years the Oblates of Mary Immaculate were charged with the direction of the Theological Seminary. The crowds of holy and learned priests which came forth from that establishment during the period named, were witnesses to the learning, piety, and wisdom with which it was conducted.

Father de Mazenod was Vicar-General to his uncle for nearly ten years. During that period the chief burden of the diocese devolved upon him, owing to the age and infirmities of his venerable uncle. His prodigious energy and devotedness enabled him to preside over his community, and at the same time administer the affairs of an important diocese. It was a time when the walls of Jerusalem had to be rebuilt. The revolution had left behind it heaps of ruins. All religious institutions had been swept away, charitable

asylums confiscated, hospitals closed, churches desecrated—some levelled to the ground, and others turned into warehouses or other secular purposes. Under the new administration, the desert began to rejoice and flourish, religious communities were re-established, churches were restored, new churches erected ; schools, orphanages, and hospitals sprang up as if by some blessed enchantment, and the ancient religious glories of Marseilles were called back into existence.

Gregory XVI had ascended the chair of Peter. His attention was soon drawn to the important works in which Father de Mazenod was engaged at Marseilles as Vicar-General to his uncle, who was now evidently drawing nigh to his end. Gregory dreaded that, at the death of the aged Bishop of that See, the Government of Louis Philippe would ask for the suppression of the See, or delay to present a candidate. The Pope also wished to secure for the important city and diocese of Marseilles a continuance of the wise and holy administration of Father de Mazenod. With this object in view, he nominated him Bishop of Icosium, and Apostolic Visitor of Tripoli and Tunis. In obedience to the voice of Gregory, Father de Mazenod had to consent to be raised to the episcopal dignity. He was consecrated in Rome by Cardinal Odescalchi, on the 14th of October 1832. The French Government took umbrage at these proceedings. A storm of persecution was let loose upon the new Bishop. He was declared to have forfeited his rights as a citizen of France, and vexatious measures were adopted in his regard, but God bore him through the storm. His holy firmness, blended with the spirit of wise conciliation, conquered finally the opposition of the government. He succeeded his uncle in the ancient See of St. Lazarus in April 1837.

CHAPTER XI.

SAGUENAY, OTTAWA, LABRADOR, AND THE NORTH-WEST :
1841-60.

WE now are about to part company, for a period, with the venerable Founder of the Oblates of Mary, whilst visiting, with our readers, field after field of the missionary labours of his sons, to find them sowing the seed of the divine word, and labouring for the salvation of souls on the shores of the great Atlantic, or amidst the snow-clad pine forests and dismal prairies of the Hudson Bay territory, or nigh the margin of the Polar Sea, or among the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains, or over the surface of the vast region which stretches from the base of the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, or on the plains of Texas, and by the coasts of the Gulf of Mexico, or amidst the burning sands of Southern Africa, or on one of the fairest Islands in the Indian Ocean—Ceylon. To all these points of Asia, Africa, and America did de Mazenod live to see the labours of the Oblates of Mary extended.

But if we break off, for a while, the recital of the personal history of Monseigneur de Mazenod, we do so in order to follow the transit of his great missionary spirit to those far regions of earth, where destitute souls are to be saved through the labours of his devoted disciples. His spirit of prayer ever accompanied his missionaries, taking part in their combats and in their triumphs. His spirit of piety, fortitude, and knowledge which they had already imbibed, was marvellously stirred up and kept alive within their breasts by his active and loving correspondence, which had a tone of inspiration about it, as if he had been largely aided by the Holy Spirit in its composition. No exile longed for father's or mother's letter to cheer him in the land of the stranger more keenly than did the son of de Mazenod sigh for the consolation of a letter from his father, to gladden him amidst the loneliness of the trackless forest, or of ocean-

like prairie, to enlighten him in his doubts, to guide him in his undertakings, and to bless him in his labours.

“Your letter,” writes an Oblate missionary from a distant region in Africa to the Bishop of Marseilles, “has afforded me joy and consolation beyond expression. It imparted to me a new stimulus to labour for God and for souls, with re-kindled fervour, and with a courage equal to the emergencies of my difficult position in the midst of these poor heathens. Accept, my venerated and most beloved Father, the assurances of my deepest gratitude for this proof of considerate kindness which you have shown to the least worthy of your sons.”

In another letter from a remote mission we find the following passage :—

“The day on which I received your letter, my Lord and beloved Father, was a real festival day for me. I could not tire feasting my eyes upon its pages. One should have experienced my sense of isolation and loneliness in the midst of these desert regions, and amongst those poor wandering tribes, to understand my feelings of relief and happiness in receiving such a letter. It seemed to me for the moment, venerated Father, as if I were transported again into your presence, and allowed to enjoy the great happiness of being nigh to you, and of sharing with those Fathers and Brothers who are privileged to dwell beside you, the holy charm of your society and conversation. You can understand, my Lord, how those of your sons who in these remote regions are fighting the good fight against such terrible odds, stand in need of being guided and inspirited in the hour of combat by the voice of their General. The soldier spirit within my breast as a missionary could not fail to be stirred into bold and courageous action, when the voice of my spiritual chieftain thus addresses me : ‘Be a true Soldier of Christ, a good Oblate, and you will force your way through the ranks of your enemies. Victory will be the certain reward of your perseverance.’ ”

From these extracts we may judge of the character of Monseigneur de Mazenod’s correspondence with his missionaries, and of the extent to which he contributed,

by his guiding and inspiring counsels, to the wide-spread and enduring success of their labours.

Canada was the first trans-ocean scene of missionary exploit opened to their zeal. At the invitation of the Bishop of Montreal, the venerable Monseigneur Bourget, addressed to the Founder and Superior General of the Oblates of Mary, a community of that Missionary Congregation was established in 1841 in the diocese of Montreal. From Montreal the Society extended to Ottawa, which was then named Bytown. The first Mass said at Ottawa was celebrated in 1827 in the cabin of a poor Irishman. In 1832 a wooden chapel was built, which was still the only place of Catholic worship in Ottawa, on the arrival there of the Oblates of Mary in 1844. A certain progress towards the erection of a new church had, however, been already made; its foundations were laid and its walls raised a few feet above ground. Father Guigues, previously Superior of the Noviciate House of Notre Dame de l'Osier, in the diocese of Grenoble, in France, was chosen as the Superior of the new community at Ottawa. It was soon decided by the Bishops of Canada, and by the Holy See, to create a new diocese, of which Ottawa was to be the centre. The eyes of the Canadian prelates, and especially of Monseigneur Bourget, were fixed on the learned and holy Father Guigues, as the worthiest pastor of the new See. The acceptance by Father Guigues, in 1848, of the dignity of Bishop of Ottawa made no change in his ordinary mode of life as a humble Religious. He continued to live after his consecration with the Fathers of his Society until the end of his days, following all the community exercises with the same exactitude as he practised before his promotion to the episcopacy. At the same time he displayed a marvellous energy in the administration of his immense diocese, and in co-operating by his personal labours in the missionary works of the Oblate Fathers. The wooden chapel gave place to a noble church, which was brought to completion under the surveillance of Father Telmon (d. 1878) and Father Dandurand (still vigorous in 1913!), both of whom were gifted with a considerable amount of architectural skill and genius. The devoted missionary labours of those two Fathers, and of Fathers Baudrand

and Molloy, were eminently successful in forming and organising a large Catholic community at Ottawa. One of the special works of the Oblates of Mary at Ottawa, was the founding there of a University College, chartered by the State in 1866, and made a Catholic University by Pope Leo XIII, in 1889. Father Honorat and his brother missionaries planted the new society in the diocese of Quebec. The large and populous district of St. Saviour's, in that city, was assigned to their care, and a large parish in Montreal.

But the spirit which Father de Mazenod communicated to his society impelled his Oblates to go forward in search of souls more in need of help than those that presented themselves in the ordinary fields of missionary zeal. In the vast Canadian forests bordering the St. Lawrence, the Ottawa, and other great rivers, tens of thousands of men were dispersed in the *chantiers* or shanties during the winter months of the year, their occupation being to fell great trees and to prepare them to be floated down the rivers when the ice broke up in spring. These poor men, who for several consecutive months were separated from all ordinary means of approaching the Sacraments, and of taking part in the public exercises of their religion, were certainly fit objects for extraordinary missionary effort, especially as they were exposed to the great temptations which are ever to be found in such promiscuous gatherings as theirs. The missionary who approaches these poor sons of the wild woods in their "shanties" must be prepared to endure privations at least as great as theirs. He must be prepared to advance through a trackless wilderness—to be lost in labyrinths of high brushwood, and of the intercepting branches of fallen trees, through which, with axe in hand, he will oftentimes have to cut his way. He will find himself at the approach of night still a wanderer, and compelled to seek shelter until day again breaks in the hollow of some aged tree. He will find his path crossed at times by the swollen torrent, through which he will have to wade at peril of life. Knee-deep in sludge will he have to travel through dense forests, which are gloomy and dismal at mid-day, even as though it were mid-night, by reason of

the heavy curtains of thick snow that hang upon the bent branches of the giant trees, shutting out almost every ray of daylight. He arrives at last at the goal of his journey hungry, cold, and wearied. A welcome may await him, or he may be received with frowns. Even though it be a welcome which greets him on his arrival, kind wishes may lighten, but they cannot remove the bulk of those privations—mental, physical, and moral—which he as a priest, as a man of education and fine feeling, will have to endure whilst passing through the rigours of five long winter months in the open forest, without other companions than those gangs of rough untutored men. But it must be acknowledged that there are attractions of a high order, for men of zeal, in such missionary exploits. Returning from the *chantiers* in the forest, each Oblate missionary counts by the thousand the number of poor woodmen he has been instrumental in admitting to the sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist.

The evangelizing of the Indian tribes on the Canadian border, and of the inhabitants of the ice-bound coast of Labrador was also undertaken by Oblate missionaries soon after their arrival in Canada. Among the devoted labourers in those difficult fields of missionary toil we find Fathers Durocher, Pinet (afterwards so well-known in England), Arnaud, Babel, Charpeney, and others. But still more distant fields of missionary labour await the cultivating zeal of the Oblate missionary.

Far away within the north-western limits of America lay regions vast almost as Europe, which extend from 49° latitude to the Frozen Ocean and Baffin's Bay, from the Hudson Bay to the Rocky Mountains. Those desert regions were the domain of the red man, of the moose and the buffalo, of the wolf and the white bear. There grim winter held sway the greater part of the year, and fettered land and lake and river in its chains of black ice, and clad them in its mantle of thick snow. In the chief portion of those inhospitable climes, mother earth refuses bread to her children. There no corn waves upon her plains, nor does vegetable life supply aught to the wants or gratification of the human palate. Man might die of hunger there, though

he were lord of boundless territory, if buffalo or deer, or fish from lake, or wild bird from eyrie, came not within his reach to supply him with food from its own substance. But sometimes these feeders of man hold aloof and mysteriously disappear and then the awful solitude of the wilderness becomes more awful still, in the absence of its habitual denizens. Then does the shadow of death fall heavily on the gaunt spare figures of the hunger-smitten tribe. Woe then to the weakest, they often at such times become the food of the strongest. The aged father and mother and the gentle child are struck down sometimes, and the men of the tribe devour the horrible repast. There are few attractions in these howling wildernesses to draw hither the footsteps of strangers from other lands. The skins and furs of their wild animals are the only objects which the miserable inhabitants of these places have to offer in exchange for the goods of the white man. Here, it is true, nature reveals herself in forms sublime and terrible in her forests, over her boundless prairies, up her mountain ranges, out upon her lakes and rivers and seas, aloft in her skies, which are sunless for months in certain latitudes, and which flame oftentimes by night with fires that rival sunflashes by their brilliancy. Pilgrims of science, and men of travel and adventure occasionally come hither ; but dame nature is ever churlish in the reception which she accords to them. Upon all new comers she imposes pains and penalties, hardships and privations, oftentimes of a most formidable kind. Many over-adventurous spirits have forfeited their lives in those frightful regions, being swept over foaming rapids, or crushed by icebergs, or frozen by night-frost, or devoured by red men, or done to death by hunger. Thus perished upon those barren steppes, killed by hunger and frost, the noble Franklin and a hundred and more of his devoted followers. The inhabitants of those melancholy solitudes had need of the advent of other visitors besides those who came to trade with them, or to study their manners and customs, or to photograph their likenesses, or to view the scenery of their lakes and prairies. They had need of those who would come to claim them as lost brothers, to acknowledge them as children of the same Father, to communicate

to them the light of faith, to embrace them in the bonds of charity, and to teach them how to love God and how to love one another. To supply these most pressing spiritual wants of the wandering tribes of the lone north-west of America, was to become the very difficult, but very meritorious, mission of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

The immense portion of British North America to which we have been alluding, was formerly part of the diocese of Quebec. More recently it became an independent district, of which Monseigneur Provencher was appointed Bishop. Gradually the number of priests under the jurisdiction of this zealous prelate continued to diminish, and no new vocations presented themselves to fill the vacancies thus created. Monseigneur Provencher was alarmed at the prospect of his new diocese becoming extinct for want of priests. He found himself at last left with only six priests, some of whom were old and infirm. In his perplexity he took counsel with the Bishops of Canada. The result of their deliberations was their agreeing to make a joint application to the Superior-General of the Oblates of Mary, in view of obtaining a body of his missionaries for the evangelizing of the tribes of the vast district in question. Many reasons at that time combined to deter Monseigneur de Mazenod from complying with this request. But there existed one superior motive for consent, and it prevailed over all reasons to the contrary: it was that this proposal was made in behalf of the most destitute souls on the face of the earth. Who so shut out from the help and sympathy of their fellow men as those wild wandering tribes of the north-western deserts of America? Nobody without risk and hardship can visit them in their lonely encampments; much less can anybody live in their midst and become all to all among them in order to gain them to God, without having to endure mental, physical, and moral tortures that demand the faith and courage of a martyr. There are other heathen lands where nothing seems to be wild, or savage, or repulsive, but man himself—lands in which, if man repels, nature invites the approach and fosters the sojourn—lands of bright skies and balmy health-giving breezes, where to dwell seems to be in a paradise on earth. The home of the red man of the

wild north has no such attraction to offer. Everything connected with that melancholy land is calculated to isolate its unhappy inhabitants from the rest of human kind, and to exclude them from the knowledge and sympathy of their fellow men. Cupidity will induce traders to visit their ice-locked frontiers. But loftier motives than those inspired by thirst of earthly gain are required to induce other visitors to penetrate to the heart of their lonely encampments in the far wilderness, there to become partakers of all their sufferings and hardships. Their state of utter isolation and spiritual destitution is to form for the Oblates one of the chief motives of their being the more earnestly sought after.

In undertaking for his society the evangelizing of the vast regions referred to, Monseigneur de Mazenod counted upon God's sending many additional labourers into the vineyard, to enable him to carry on the great missionary work for which he had become responsible. His trust in God was not in vain. When the news spread abroad in France that the Society of the Oblates of Mary had undertaken missions for the conversion to Christianity of the Indian tribes inhabiting the north-western deserts of America, an extraordinary development of vocations to that society began to manifest itself. Applications for admission to its ranks came from divers points of France, from the shores of the Mediterranean, from the vineyards and olive groves on the banks of the Rhone, from the Alpine terraces overhanging the rapid Isère, from the green fields and orchards of Brittany and La Vendée, from the busy centres of Alsace, and the vine-clad plains of Lorraine. These applications came from church students, from young priests, from professors of seminaries, and in several cases from parish priests, who gave up good appointments to become Oblate Missionaries to the Indian tribes. The professions of law, medicine, and the army contributed also a share to the list of novice missionaries. To these generous hearts their own *Belle France* seemed to lose her power of attraction, and to give place to a rival land in their thoughts and affections. Leaving their own historic and beautiful France, the land of literature, the arts, and the sciences,

they give preference, as a place of abode till death, to a land without a history, without a past, without beauty—lone, desolate, and distant.

Thither are they prepared to go without hope or desire of coming back again, longing for nothing more than to be spent, and to spend themselves, in labours for the saving of the souls of the dusky children of the forest and the prairie. The greatest earthly recompense which these noble apostolic spirits aim at, is the privilege of dying on the battle-field of their labours, and of finding a grave somewhere on the steppes of the Barren Grounds, or by the margin of the Great Slave Lake, or by the banks of the Mackenzie, or the Peel River, or nigh to the shores of the Arctic Ocean.

Other vocations are ripening beyond the Atlantic. Canada is to take a noble part in contributing her contingent to the little cohort of apostolic men who, with cross upon their breast, are to invade the empire of the prince of darkness in the far north, and to establish on its ruins the triumphs of faith. One morning, early in the year 1845, a youthful novice knelt before the altar of the oratory, in the Noviciate House of the Oblates, at Longueuil, near Montreal. He was one who had before him, whilst still in the world, a future full of bright promise of preferment and success, being the nephew of the Prime Minister of Canada, and being on his own part possessed of great natural abilities, which were highly cultivated by a careful education. All these advantages and prospects he renounced in order to become a humble Religious in the Society of the Oblates of Mary. On the morning to which we refer, he came to the foot of the altar to plead for the life of a beloved mother. He had then just received the news that nothing short of a miracle could save her life. With loving confidence he implores God in earnest prayer to work that miracle, and to grant to him his mother's life. He does not come empty-handed to address this petition to God. He comes into the Divine presence with an offering: the offering is that of himself. He makes a promise in prayer to this effect, that should God restore his mother to health he would ask his Superiors to allow him to consecrate his whole life to the evangelizing of the Indian tribes in the far region of the

Red River. Scarcely had this prayer been pronounced and this holy promise made, when his mother was suddenly restored to perfect health. In fulfilment of his promise, Alexander Taché, having heard of his mother's restoration to health, presented himself to his Superiors to seek their consent to his devoting himself to the work of evangelizing the Indian tribes of the Red River regions. Such were the circumstances which led to the selection of Brother Taché, while yet a novice, and before he was ordained a Priest, to be the companion of the first Oblate Father who was sent as a Missionary to the Red River. On the feast of St. John the Baptist 1845, Father Peter Aubert and Brother Taché knelt in the Chapel of the Noviciate House at Longueuil, to receive their obedience for the Red River Missions from their Superior, the venerable Father Guigues (afterwards first Bishop of Ottawa). The sentiments experienced by the youthful Missionary Brother Taché, as he quitted, as he then thought for ever, the precincts of a home he affectionately loved, are thus portrayed in a letter written by him at a later period :—

“ You will allow me to tell you what I felt as I receded from the sources of the St. Lawrence, on whose banks Providence had fixed my birth-place, and by whose waters I first conceived the thought of becoming a Missionary of the Red River. I drank of those waters for the last time, and mingled with them some parting tears, and confided to them some of the secret thoughts and affectionate sentiments of my inmost heart. I could imagine how some of the bright waves of this dear old river, rolling down from lake to lake, would at last strike on the beach nigh to which a beloved mother was praying for her son that he might become a perfect Oblate and a holy Missionary. I knew that being intensely pre-occupied with that son's happiness, she would listen to the faintest murmuring sound, to the very beatings of the waves coming from the north-west, as if to discover in them the echoes of her son's voice asking a prayer or promising a remembrance. I give expression to what I felt on that occasion, for the recollection now, after the lapse of twenty years, of the emotions I experienced in quitting home

and friends, enables me more fully to appreciate the generous devotedness of those who give up all they hold most dear for the salvation of souls."

An unbroken journey of sixty-two days conducted the two young Missionaries to St. Boniface, on the Red River. They met on their arrival with a cordial welcome from Monseigneur Provencher, who seemed, however, to be somewhat taken aback by the youthful appearance of Brother Taché. "I asked," he said, half playfully, "for a Missionary, and they have sent me a mere boy." This "mere boy" in five years, was to become his Coadjutor-Bishop, then his successor. And owing to his merits and the success of his labours, St. Boniface, the title of the new diocese of the Red River district, was to become an Archbishopric.

On the 1st of September 1845, Brother Taché, who had during his journey reached his twenty-second year, was ordained Deacon, and on the following 12th of October he was raised to the Priesthood. That same day his year's Noviciate terminated, and shortly before the ceremony of his ordination began, he had the happiness of pronouncing in the presence of Father Aubert, his Religious Vows. These vows were the first ever pronounced in that land; they were pronounced on the banks of the Red River by the great-grand-nephew of Varennes de la Vérandrye, by whom that river and the surrounding country had been discovered. After his ordination as Priest, Father Taché remained some months at St. Boniface, doing Missionary work, and occupied also in studying the languages of the tribes. On the 8th of July 1846, he received his obedience to proceed to Ile à la Crosse (in the modern Saskatchewan), which was reached after a harassing journey that lasted for two months. On his arrival he heard of an Indian chief who lay dangerously ill at Lac Vert or Green Lake, ninety miles distant, and who desired to be baptized. Thither the young Missionary hastened through dismal swamps and vast pine forests. On his return it was arranged that he was to proceed after four days rest to Lac Caribou (or Reindeer Lake), which lay 350 miles to the north-east of Ile à la Crosse. On the feast of the Annunciation 1847, he arrived at Lac

Caribou, the first who ever reached that desolate spot, to announce there the gospel of peace. There he had the happiness of instructing and baptizing several poor Indians.

His next missionary expedition was to Athabaska : on his way thither he was warned of the fierce and savage character of the Indian tribes who frequented that place ; but, nevertheless, he courageously pursued his weary journey of 400 miles to the end, travelling almost the whole way on foot. A great consolation and a great missionary triumph awaited him at Athabaska, which was to compensate him abundantly for the harassing fatigues of his journey. In the course of three weeks he baptized 194 Indians of the Cree and Montagnais tribes. The efforts of the Missionary, aided by Divine grace, wrought a complete transformation in these poor children of the wilderness, who in their exterior became gentle and tractable, and in heart devout and fervent Christians. The next year he visited them again. He found that in the meantime the seeds of faith and piety had taken deep root in their souls, and that all his hopes in their regard were fully realised.

In 1848, the Indians of Athabaska showed themselves less enthusiastic than they were the previous year ; but, in reality, far more deeply Christian. In the meantime those divine truths so new to them, and which their minds so readily imbibed at first, were pondered over by them leisurely ; they examined and discussed them among themselves, and the precise way in which they appreciated them was calculated to fill one with surprise. It is true as the young Missionary himself writes :—

“ Although the heart which so often rebels against right reason, not only in the case of the untutored child of the forest, but also of him born and nurtured in the midst of civilization, still offered its practical objections to the full Christianising of these Indians, nevertheless, the triumph of the Faith was secured at Athabaska. It is now one of the chief centres of Christianity in north-western America.”

These happy beginnings inspired Father Taché's zeal to pursue with continued ardour his apostolic career. The life of a Missionary in those distant regions is chequered

by successes and disappointments. The latter would seem often to come in undue proportion. Sometimes, after accomplishing in face of frightful difficulties a journey of hundreds of miles, on arriving at the place of expected rendezvous, the Missionary Father finds that, owing to delays which unavoidably occurred upon his way, he has arrived too late, and that the tribes in search of whom he had set out, have already taken their departure. Meantime his little stock of provisions is becoming exhausted, and the few Indians who have been accompanying him abandon him alone in the wilderness. The dogs of his team are famishing. He divides with them the last remnants of food that remain. He starves himself to save the lives of these poor brutes. If they perish he will have to abandon all his possessions in the desert—sacred vestments, chalices, temporary altar, books, everything. Under such circumstances he begins his return journey. The post from which he started lies perhaps three or four hundred miles away. He may have to pass two or three days without food: one Oblate father, Father Lacombe, was on one occasion six days without tasting food. The famished missionary, perhaps, breaks the ice of some lake in search of fish, which he may or may not succeed in catching. He aims his rifle at the passing bird or beast. He may be a good marksman or he may fail. Sometimes bird, beast, and fish seem mysteriously to disappear from air, earth, and water, and nothing gives sign of life; all around—everything seems dead or petrified in the black polar frost. Sometimes the missionary and his team lose themselves, and keep straying for a whole day and night over the frozen surface of some ocean lake, a wilderness of ice spreading out from horizon to horizon. No land-mark is there to guide him out of the frozen labyrinth, no friendly voice to direct him. No shelter can be found there by night; no fire can be kindled; cold, hunger, thirst, the darkness and the storm all assail him at the same time, and hope there seems to be none, save in God. But in God the hope of His faithful servant in that supreme hour burns brightly. A feeling rises up within him that he is then more in the Divine presence than he ever was before. He knows that if he is in such straits it is

because he has gone forth at God's bidding to do God's work and to save souls ; therefore does he count with fullest assurance upon God's help. He does not count thus in vain, as is abundantly proved by the providential succours that have come repeatedly in marvellous ways to the rescue of Oblate missionaries at the most critical moments.

In July 1848, Father Taché was joined at Ile à la Crosse by Father Faraud, who was afterwards to become a true apostle in the lone north of America. Lieutenant Hooper, R.N., who took a part in the Plover expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, thus speaks of Father Faraud, whom he met on the shores of the Athabaska Lake, at Fort Chipewyan :—

“ We were politely received by Mr. Todd, and at supper were introduced to Père Faraud, a French Missionary of the Roman Catholic Religion, with whom I enjoyed the privilege of much interesting conversation. Monsieur Faraud had apparently devoted considerable time to the study of the Indians in this locality.”—*Tents of the Taski*, page 403.

In 1848 Father Taché had been two years without seeing an Oblate Father. His time had been spent either with the Indians in the places of their encampments, or in journeying from point to point over the vast district confided to his personal charge. He had endured long periods of isolation and solitude. With unspeakable delight did he hail the advent of a brother missionary. For a while they enjoyed together the sweets of community life in the solitary prairie. Then each betook himself anew to his own special missionary occupations. In the commencement of January 1849, they were both at Athabaska, where disquieting news reached them from St. Boniface. They were informed by their Superior, Father Aubert, that owing to the decrease in the receipts of the “ Work of Propagation of the Faith ” in France, caused by the revolution of the preceding year, it was probable that their missions would have to be abandoned. The thought of having to forsake the work they had undertaken in behalf of the poor red men of the wilderness was insupportable, especially at a

time when the harvest fields of souls which they had been cultivating, amidst so many personal sacrifices, now seemed to be ripening for the sickle. With common accord Fathers Taché and Faraud wrote a joint-letter to their Superior, couched in the following noble and heroic words :—

“ The news which your letter brings us afflicts us profoundly. We cannot reconcile ourselves to the thought of abandoning our dear Neophytes and our numerous Catechumens. We will confine our demands upon your assistance to the narrowest limits. We hope that you will always be able to provide us at least with altar breads and wine for the Holy Sacrifice. We ask only one further favour, which is that we be allowed to continue our present labours. The fishes of the lakes will supply us with the food we shall require, and the wild beasts of the forests will furnish us with clothing. Again we beg of you, Reverend Father, not to call us away from a work to which our hearts are so much attached.”

At that hour, in their distant homes, fond hearts would beat quickly with joy at the news of their return. Mothers with delighted welcome would hail the coming back of their sons from their distant missions after an absence of years. All this the two young Oblate missionaries knew and felt. And were they to yield to their human feelings, they themselves would also rejoice at the prospect of being restored to civilized life, to the embraces of fond parents, and to the society of early friends. But they had made their sacrifice. They had at God's interior bidding given up father and mother, and houses and lands, and all things for the Gospel's sake. They are not now going to retract holy promises made to God. Nay, they renew their choice of the savage wilderness, with all its perils and privations as the place of their habitual abode ; and they declare their continued preference for the society of those poor wild children of nature, whom they are seeking to reclaim from ignorance and vice, to all the endearments of home and to every prospect of earthly pleasure and emolument. Happily the dreaded evil was averted, and Fathers Taché and

Faraud were allowed to continue their work of zeal in favour of the Indian tribes of the Red River forests and prairies.

Sir John Richardson, when on his expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, met Father Taché at Ile à la Crosse, and thus speaks of him and his colleague :—

“ They were both intelligent and well-informed men, and devoted to the task of instructing the Indians. They have already taught many of their pupils here to read and write.”

Elsewhere he says of the Oblate Missionaries whom he met :—

“ By sympathising with the people in all their distresses, taking a strong interest in everything that concerns them, acting as their physicians when sick, and advisers on all occasions, the Priests of the Mission have gained their entire confidence.”—*Arctic Searching Expedition*.

In 1851 the position of Father Taché is about to undergo an important change. His virtues and merits mark him out as the fitting coadjutor to Monseigneur Provencher. A letter of obedience from Monseigneur de Mazenod invites him to Marseilles. His first meeting with the holy Founder was marked by signs of their mutual and deepest appreciation of one another. He beholds for the first time that father whom he had been loving and venerating in the far distance, with a filial devotedness not surpassed by that of any of his sons, who had been privileged to grow up like “ olive branches around his table ” in their native France. And Monseigneur de Mazenod rejoiced in clasping for the first time to his breast the young apostle who had borne the standard of the cross into far regions whither it had not till then penetrated, and into the midst of peoples to whom he was the first to proclaim the glad tidings of redemption. Their minds and their hearts had already been in close and loving intercourse, and the spirit of de Mazenod had found its way beyond the seas and reappeared in the life and deeds of Alexander Taché. When Monseigneur de Mazenod unfolded to Father Taché the intentions of the Holy See to create him coadjutor Bishop to Monseigneur

Provencher, with right of succession, the humble missionary was startled at the proposal. He pleaded many reasons for not accepting the proffered dignity, and said moreover he wished to remain always an Oblate. "It is that precisely," said Monseigneur de Mazenod, "I wish you to do." "But is not," rejoined Father Taché, "the episcopal dignity incompatible with the religious life?" "What," replied Monseigneur de Mazenod, "is it to be supposed that the plentitude of the priesthood excludes the perfection to which the religious man is called?" Then assuming that lofty bearing and sacred dignity which distinguished him on fitting occasions, he said, "Nobody is more a Bishop than I am; yet, nobody is more an Oblate." He further explained that the acceptance by Father Taché of the proposed dignity would help powerfully to consolidate and to develop the newly-founded missions of the Red River; in fact, that the very existence of those missions depended in a great measure upon such compliance on his part. Moved by these words of his venerated Superior, Father Taché yielded his consent to what was proposed in his regard. He received Episcopal Consecration at the hands of Monseigneur de Mazenod, who was assisted in that function by another Oblate Bishop, Monseigneur Guibert, then Bishop of Viviers. Monseigneur Taché would willingly have prolonged his stay in Europe, had it not been for an engagement which he had entered into with some Indian tribes, to meet them at Ile à la Crosse early in the following September. He shortened his visits to Rome and to Marseilles, and spent only a few days with his mother and family in Canada, in order not to fail in his appointment with his Indian neophytes. In Canada he was joined by Father Lacombe, a young and learned priest, who was soon to become an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, and one of the chief mainstays of the North American missions. Monseigneur Provencher's first intention on the arrival of his coadjutor, was to retain him at St. Boniface; but he readily yielded to the strong reasons adduced by the young missionary bishop for his fixing his residence at Ile à la Crosse. Monseigneur Taché, on taking his departure for his distant home in the midst of the Indian tribes of

Ile à la Crosse, knelt to receive the blessing of Monseigneur Provencher. The aged and saintly prelate gave expression on that occasion to the following prophetic words :—

“ It is not customary for a bishop to ask for another bishop’s blessing, but as I am soon to die, and as we shall never again meet in this world, I will bless you once more on this earth, whilst awaiting the happiness of embracing you in heaven.”

Monseigneur Provencher breathed his last at St. Boniface, on the 7th of July 1853, when he was succeeded by his coadjutor. At the request of the latter when in Rome, the Holy Father gave to the whole of the north-western diocese the title of St. Boniface. Monseigneur Taché continued to reside for some years after his consecration at Ile à la Crosse. From this point he made frequent and distant missionary excursions to visit different tribes at certain places of rendezvous. The privations which he habitually had to endure, not only when journeying through his vast diocese, but also when at home in his episcopal residence, are in some measure revealed to us in the following playful description of his dwelling place and of his method of travelling :—

“ My episcopal palace is thirty feet in length, twenty in width, and seven in height. It is built of mud which, however, is not impermeable, for the wind and the rain and other atmospheric annoyances find easy access through its walls. A few panes of glass and some pieces of parchment constitute its luminary system. In this palace, though at first glance everything looks mean and diminutive, a character of real grandeur, nevertheless, pervades the whole establishment. For instance, my secretary is no less a personage than a bishop—my valet is also a bishop—my cook himself is a bishop. These illustrious employees have countless defects, but as they are all so much devoted to me personally, I quietly endure their shortcomings. When they grow tired of their domestic employments I give them some work to do out of doors, and I give orders for the whole establishment of Monseigneur to get ready for a journey

of some months in the wilderness. The travelling party consists of his lordship, two Indians, and a half-breed, who conducts a team of four dogs. The team is laden with cooking utensils, bedding, a wardrobe, a portable altar and its fittings, a food basket, and other odds and ends. Instead of ordinary episcopal shoes, his lordship puts on a pair of *rackets*, or snow shoes, which are from three to four feet in length ; laced in these his feet glide without sinking into the snow, over which he advances at first very painfully, at the side of his baggage team. At the approach of evening the strength of the whole party, dogs, Indians, and bishop, being exhausted, they halt for the night. An hour's labour suffices to prepare a mansion wherein his lordship will repose till the next morning. The snow is carefully removed, branches of trees are spread over the cleared ground ; these form the ornamental flooring of the new palace, the sky is its lofty roof, the moon and stars are its brilliant lamps, the dark pine forests or the boundless horizon its sumptuous wainscoting. The four dogs of the team are its sentinels, the wolves and the owls preside over the musical orchestra, hunger and cold give zest to the joy experienced at the sight of the preparations which are being made for the evening banquet and the night's repose. The chilled and stiffened limbs bless the merciful warmth of the kindled pile to which the 'giants of the forest' have supplied abundant fuel. Having taken possession of their mansion, the proprietors partake of a common repast ; the dogs are the first served, then comes his lordship's turn, his table is his knees, the table service consists of a pocket knife, a bowl, a tin plate, and a five-pronged fork, which is an old family heirloom. The '*Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino*' is pronounced before the repast begins. Nature is too grand and beautiful in the midst even of all its trying rigours for us to forget its Author ; therefore, during these encampments our hearts become filled with thoughts that are solemn and touching and overpowering. We feel it then to be our duty to communicate such thoughts to the companions of our journey, and to invite them to love *Him* by whom all those wonderful things we behold around us were made, and to give thanks to Him from whom all blessings flow. Having

rendered our homage to God, Monseigneur's valet removes from his lordship's shoulders the capote which he had worn during the day, and extending it on the ground calls it a mattress ; his mittens and his travelling bag pass in the darkness of the night for a pillow ; two woollen blankets undertake the task of protecting the bishop from the cold of the night, and of producing the warmth necessary for his repose ; lest they should fail in such offices, Providence comes to their aid, by sending a kindly little layer of snow, which spreads a protecting mantle without distinction over all alike. Beneath its white folds sleep tranquilly the prelate and his suite, repairing in their calm slumbers the fatigues of the previous day, and gathering strength for the journey of the morrow. What would be the surprise of some spoiled child of civilization if lifting this snow mantle he found lying beneath it bishop, Indians, and the four dogs of the team ? "

This is not the description of an occasional journey made by Monseigneur Taché in the wilderness ; but of journeys habitually performed by himself and his brother missionaries, according as the requirements of their ministry demanded. It is no uncommon thing for an Oblate missionary in the Arctic regions to sleep every night successively for two or three months in the open air, lying upon a rug spread upon the frozen ground on a spot from which the snow has been just removed. On such occasions the whole party, priests, Indians, and even the poor dogs, will group together in one spot, to maintain vital heat under the appalling cold of those worse than Siberian nights.

From Lac la Biche Monseigneur Taché set out for the mission of Our Lady of Victories, Athabaska. He launched his canoe on the waters of the giant river, Athabaska, at a point which was considered unnavigable and full of dangers. It was important for the object proposed in the establishment of the mission of our Lady of Victories (namely, that it should serve as a central depôt for the various other missions) to ascertain whether that river was navigable or not. To his great satisfaction he was able to assure himself, by personal experience, of its being navigable

at those points where it was supposed to offer insuperable obstacles to progress on its waters. On the morning of the 2nd July, at 2 a.m., after a journey of ten days, he arrived at our Lady of Victories. At the sound of their Bishop's voice asking for admission in the early morning, Fathers Grollier and Grandin and Brother Alexis rose without delay to receive him. Tears of joy at the happy meeting were abundantly shed on both sides. When the news of the arrival of the 'great man of prayer' reached the neighbouring tribes, they flocked in crowds to the Mission to do honour to him who had been the first to preach to them, seven years previously, the message of salvation. The arrival at the same time of Father Faraud, and the good news he brought of the success of his mission at Great Slave Lake, completed the joy of the missionaries of Athabaska. They spent there one of those delicious weeks which one is rarely privileged to enjoy on earth. At last the morning of their separation came, and each had to return to his life of isolation in the vast solitude of the wilderness, where no other companions awaited him but the poor children of the forest and prairie. With heavy hearts they bade one another good-bye, feeling the keenness of the separation the more, because of the fulness of the joy they had experienced in one another's society, during the period of their temporary re-union. "O you, my brothers," exclaims Monseigneur Taché in referring to this incident, "who have the happiness of living always in community, have pity upon those who cannot enjoy that consolation; pray for your isolated brethren."

During the year 1856, the Fathers at Lac la Biche succeeded in opening a road through the thick forest which separated their beautiful lake from the prairies that fringed the borders of the river Athabaska. This herculean labour was accomplished by months of incessant toil on their part. The opening of this roadway through the forest facilitated very much the expedition which the missionary of Lac la Biche undertook, every year, to visit the Indians of Saskatchewan.

Monseigneur Taché having visited several of the most distant parts of his diocese, at last directed his steps to St.

Boniface. Here, through the zeal of his predecessor, he found erected a cathedral, a Bishop's House, which, though plain, was large and commodious, and a convent, which was tenanted by a community of Canadian Sisters of Charity. The cathedral was a fine church, and was the only building which deserved to be called a church in that diocese. The "palace," besides being an episcopal residence, became an asylum for blind and aged Indians, and an orphanage, into which were gathered many poor little waifs and strays of humanity, whom the Bishop picked up on his missionary circuits. There also he fed and lodged, from time to time, several Indian Chiefs, whilst they were being trained in the practice and knowledge of the Christian religion, which it was intended they should afterwards become instrumental in propagating among their respective tribes. From St. Boniface Monseigneur Taché continued to visit point after point of his vast diocese. In December 1860, he undertook a journey which was to last for six or seven weeks. It lay through one of the most desolate portions of his diocese, and he had to suffer more than ordinary discomforts, chiefly from the absence of fuel. The intense cold had destroyed all vegetation, and it was with difficulty that even the roots and stumps of trees could be found wherewith to kindle a fire at the close of the day's journey. On the morning of the 14th of December he writes :—

"We left our snow bed at the early hour of one a.m. to continue our journey ; we travelled until ten a.m., when we halted to rest and to partake of a little food. We found it almost impossible to kindle a fire ; at last we partially succeeded. I sat beside the dying embers, cold and hungry and wearied ; a peculiar sadness oppressed me. I was then nine hundred miles distant from St. Boniface."

This sadness of which the good bishop speaks would seem to be a presentiment of what was then occurring at St. Boniface, the news of which he would not learn till his return. Leaving the zealous prelate to pursue his journey in the desert with a solitary guide, we ask our readers to accompany us back to St. Boniface.

The hospitable shelter of the bishop's house had been extended, in his lordship's absence, to a great sufferer, a French missionary, Father Goiffon (not an Oblate). This devoted priest, being on his way from St. Paul, Minnesota, to the scene of his labours at Pembina, left his companions behind and advanced alone on horseback, hoping thus to get sooner to his journey's end. On the 3rd of November 1860, he was overtaken by a furious tempest, alone, in the midst of a great prairie, where he could find no shelter. A violent and intensely cold wind lifted the snow in thick clouds from the ground. Father Goiffon's clothes, which were still wet from the rain of the previous day, became one mass of ice. He still struggled forward till the close of the day. His general sufferings were so great that he did not perceive that both his feet had become frozen. His horse could carry him no further : he had to alight. It was then he discovered that he could no longer use his feet. At the side of his poor horse he sank down in the snow, in which he managed to dig a hole. There he lay for five long nights and four days. His horse died of hunger and fatigue. To save his own life from death by starvation, he contrived to cut some morsels from the dead body of his horse. On the morning of the 8th of November he was discovered in this frightful situation. The Oblate Fathers at St. Boniface hearing of his condition, went immediately in search of him. They stayed with him for a fortnight, awaiting his being able to bear removal to St. Boniface. Medical aid, with some difficulty, was procured for the invalid. On examination it was found that amputation of both feet would be necessary. The right was amputated on December 3rd. But hemorrhage set in. On the morning of the 14th of December the patient's life was despaired of. At ten a.m. that day his attendants were suddenly startled by the cry of "fire." Presently Fathers Simonet and Mestre rushed into his room to rescue him. "Go quickly, Fathers," he said, "and save other lives more precious than mine. Leave me to perish in the flames, for my life is worthless. I am ready now to die, if it be God's will." Hurriedly seizing him, they bore him safely through the dense smoke and stifling heat. They endeavoured in vain to re-enter the burning

house, to procure a covering of some sort to wrap him in. They were forced by a sad necessity, to allow him to remain for a considerable time in the cold December air, without sufficient covering. But the kind providence of God rendered this circumstance instrumental in saving his life. The intense cold stopped the hemorrhage, and his life was spared. He died in Minnesota only in 1910.

The flames continued to spread at St. Boniface on December 14, 1860. Vain were the efforts of the Fathers, and the crowd of affrighted Indians who flocked to their help, to stay the progress of the fire. One poor blind man, who was housed through charity in the bishop's palace, perished, all efforts to rescue him proving useless. Burning embers from the house on fire were carried by a high wind towards the cathedral. That noble building was soon wrapt in flames, and in two hours nothing remained of the finest edifice in the Hudson Bay territory but a few fragments of calcined walls. After a short interval the fire resumed its destructive course. The convent of the Sisters of Charity was burned with its stores of clothing and provisions for their orphans, and for the aged and infirm. What was the grief of the good bishop, when, on his return from his painful journey, he found his whole establishment, and the noble cathedral which his predecessor had spent thirty-five years in founding and erecting, now reduced to ashes! He thus writes on the subject to the Bishop of Montreal:—

“ You may judge, my lord, of my emotion when, on the 23rd of February, after a journey of fifty-four days in the depth of winter, after sleeping forty-four nights in the open air, I arrived at St. Boniface, and knelt in the midst of the ruins caused by the disaster of the 14th of December, on that spot where lately stood a thriving religious establishment. But the destruction of the episcopal establishment was not the only trial which it pleased God that year to send us. A frightful inundation invaded our colony, and plunged its population in profound misery. What should the bishop of St. Boniface do in presence of these ruins, and under the weight of so heavy a load of affliction, but bow down his head in Christian and loving submission to the

Divine will, whilst blessing the hand that smote him, and adoring the merciful justice of God who chastised him."

Whilst the flood was at its height, another event occurred which caused additional grief to the heart of the good bishop. The Superioress of the Sisters of Charity, Sister Valade, died. No doubt her death was hastened by the calamities which she witnessed around her, and in which she so largely shared herself. There was a something peculiarly sad about her funeral procession. All who took part in it had to walk knee deep in water whilst conveying her holy remains for interment to the flooded ruins of the cathedral. Alas! not a dry spot could be found for her grave.

The missionary spirit of Monseigneur Taché, though sorely tried and chastened by the succession of disasters, was not crushed thereby. He lost no time in setting to work for the rebuilding of what had been destroyed by fire and flood. An ample benediction was awaiting the heroic efforts of the devoted prelate to raise up again the ruined walls of Jerusalem. From the ashes of the former cathedral, phoenix-like a church of nobler dimensions rose.

Whittier, the Quaker poet of Massachusetts, in his poem, "The Red River Voyageur," gives expression in the following lines to sentiments suggested by the "Roman Mission" at St. Boniface:—

Out and in the river is winding
The links of its long, red chain,
Through belts of dusky pine-land
And gusty leagues of plain.

Only, at times, a smoke wreath
With the drifting cloud-rack joins,—
The smoke of the hunting lodges
Of the wild Assinneboines.

Drearily blows the north wind
From the land of ice and snow;
The eyes that look are weary,
And heavy the hands that row.

And with one foot on the water,
And one upon the shore,
The Angel of Shadow gives warning
That day shall be no more.

Is it the clang of the wild geese,
Is it the Indian's yell,
That lends to the voice of the north wind
The tones of a far-off bell ?

The voyageur smiles as he listens
To the sound that grows apace ;
Well he knows the vesper ringing
Of the bells of St. Boniface.

The bells of the Roman Mission,
That call from their turrets twain
To the boatman on the river,
To the hunter on the plain !

Even so in our mortal journey
The bitter north winds blow ;
And thus upon life's Red River
Our hearts, as oarsmen, row.

And when the Angel of Shadow
Rests his feet on wave and shore,
And our eyes grow dim with watching,
And our hearts grow faint at the oar,

Happy is he who heareth
The signal of his release,
In the bells of the Holy City,
The chimes of eternal peace ! ”

CHAPTER XII.

A NEW BISHOP IN THE NORTH-WEST.

MISSIONARY posts were now established two thousand miles distant from St. Boniface. The good bishop found it had become impossible for him to visit, at necessary intervals, the missions of his diocese. He consequently applied to the Holy See to have a coadjutor named. Father Grandin was appointed to this office, with the consent of Monseigneur de Mazenod, under whose eye he had been trained to the duties of an Oblate Religious and Missionary, and by whom he had been ordained priest. Father Grandin received episcopal consecration at the hands of Monseigneur de Mazenod at Marseilles, on November 30, 1859. He hastened back from Europe after his consecration, to pursue the same laborious missionary career which he had been already following for several years.

Shortly after his return from Europe he undertook, at Monseigneur Taché's request, the visitation of the northern regions of the vast diocese of St. Boniface. He left Ile à la Crosse on the 4th of June, 1861, and arrived at Great Portage la Loche on the evening of the 10th. A large number of Indians were awaiting his arrival. He devoted two days and nights to the work of instructing them, and of hearing their confessions. On the 20th of June he reached Lake Athabaska, where he found Father Faraud who had then been twelve years labouring at that post, and who had made himself perfect master of the Montagnais language. At the time of the arrival of Monseigneur Grandin, this good Father was suffering from great exhaustion, owing to his extraordinary labours and privations. Monseigneur Grandin stayed with him until the 1st of

July, when he embarked on the Slave River. That river was very much swollen below the point of its junction with the Peace River, which was greatly flooded by the thawing of the snow on the Rocky Mountains. The Bishop's frail canoe was exposed that day to the danger of being broken and sunk, by coming into collision with some of the huge uprooted trees that were being swept along by the violent current. On the 2nd of July he perceived a large encampment of Indians on the banks of the river. They had intended to meet him at Lake Athabaska, but were delayed on their way by the floods of the river. They were greatly rejoiced at meeting him, and they wished him to remain with them for some days. But he was unable to comply with their request, owing to the scarcity of provisions from which they were suffering at the time. They informed him that the rapids which he was approaching were never, to their knowledge, in so dangerous a condition. They expressed great fears for the safety of his little bark, which they said was too slightly built and too heavily laden to be fit to encounter the fury of the torrents through which he would have to pass. However, an hour's sail brought the bishop and his little party of Indians to the first great rapid. All had to disembark, and everybody (not excepting the bishop himself) had to charge his shoulders with a portion of the luggage. The little boat had to be lifted out of the water, and borne on the shoulders of the crew to the nearest navigable point of the river. These portages were of frequent occurrence, and were sometimes accompanied with considerable difficulties. High hills, capped with thick pine forests, had sometimes to be traversed on such occasions. The bishop had to bear his full part of the fatigue of those difficult portages. He was often to be seen heavily laden with some portion of the luggage, or advancing at the head of the party with axe in hand, cutting a passage for himself and the others through the thickets of pine wood which crowned the heights they had to scale. On the evening of the 5th of July they entered Salt River. After a short sail they arrived opposite the hut of Beaulieu, an old half-breed chief, who deserves special

mention in these pages. This good old man and his family were true Christians, and they had rendered, on different occasions, important services to the Oblate missionaries. Sir John Richardson refers thus to Beaulieu : —“ We received some bags of salt from Beaulieu, who was guide and hunter to Sir John Franklin on his second overland journey, and who has built a house at the mouth of the Salt River.” In 1856 Beaulieu surrendered his house for several months to Fathers Grandin and Gascon, whilst they were engaged in evangelizing the tribes that frequented that locality. On the departure of these Fathers, Beaulieu and his family were unwilling to return to their house. They looked on it as a sacred place, an altar having been erected, and the holy sacrifice of the Mass having been celebrated under its roof. They built another residence for themselves, and set their former one apart as a “ House of Prayer.” The good old Beaulieu did his best to beautify this desert Oratory. He placed all his religious prints around the altar, which the Fathers, on their departure, left standing. At the foot of this altar the old chieftain, as a true patriarch, used to assemble, on Sundays and holidays, his children and grand-children, and such Indian families as happened at the time to be encamped in his neighbourhood, to recite the rosary, and sing devout hymns. He would on such occasions address some words of instruction to those assembled, and if he thought the circumstances of any particular case demanded public reproof, he did not shrink from administering it. He recited night prayers for the members of his own household every night. By such means he kept faith and piety alive in his family during the long intervals that necessarily elapsed between the visits of the missionary Fathers.

This was the first time Monseigneur Grandin visited Beaulieu and his family since he had been a bishop. Unfortunately they were then suffering great privations from want of food. With tears in his eyes, Beaulieu informed the bishop that they had nothing but a few carp to offer him to eat, as the floods in the river prevented them catching any other sort of fish ; besides, his sons had failed in their hunting expedition. “ This being so,”

said his lordship, "I will spend the night in hearing the confessions of all who are prepared to approach the sacraments, and to-morrow I shall be ready to take my departure." This resolution was necessary, for if the bishop drew upon his own stock of provisions whilst stopping with Beaulieu, he would find himself unable to proceed further with his journey. Beaulieu was much grieved when he heard that Monseigneur Grandin would be compelled to go away so soon. He earnestly begged the bishop to send a missionary to stay always with his tribe. "Formerly," he said, "whenever I asked you to send us a Father, you used to say to me that I should apply to the 'great priest'; now that you have become a great priest yourself, it is to you I make application. The chief trader has informed me that a sum of thirty pounds is coming to me from the sale of my furs. This is all I possess in the world. I will put this sum aside for the support of the missionary Father. Moreover, he can count on the aid of our willing arms to help him to live." The following day Monseigneur Grandin sang Mass in Beaulieu's "House of Prayer," and administered Holy Communion to him, and all the adult members of his family. He further administered Confirmation to several Indians of neighbouring tribes. The bishop erected a large cross on a prominent position, and counselled Beaulieu to pray often at its foot for the Holy Father, Pius IX. "I always pray for him," replied the old chief. He then recited aloud a prayer for the Pope and the Church, which he said Fathers Faraud and Eynard had taught him. "I alone," he said, "know that prayer, but I repeat it aloud that all the others may be able to join with me in saying it." Having given his blessing to Beaulieu and his family, and to a large group of Indians, and having shaken hands with everybody, the bishop embarked again on the Salt River on his way further north, his companions being two Indians and a little boy, a grandson of Beaulieu's, who was to become his sacristan. After two days' sailing and rowing, during which they encountered very severe weather, and frequently got thoroughly drenched, they arrived at Great Slave Lake. St. Joseph's Mission, to which they

were going, was situated on a little island in that lake. The bishop writes to Monseigneur de Mazenod :—

“ On approaching the shores of the island, we saw a crowd of Indians led by Fathers Eynard and Gascon and Brother Kearney, awaiting our arrival. This is the Mission which I expected would be confided to me, at the time when God was about to load me with graver responsibilities. I was deeply moved when I reflected on the sufferings and privations which those Fathers who were sent here in my stead have had since then to endure. Having warmly acknowledged the affectionate greetings by which I was received on my arrival, I was conducted by the Fathers to their little oratory, a room scarcely nine feet square, which was screened off from a public room in which the Indians assembled for Holy Mass and evening devotions, on Sundays and Holidays, and for instructions on weekdays. This little oratory, poor and narrow as it was, nevertheless contained, as really as did the womb of Mary, Him whom the Heavens and the earth cannot contain. Could you visit this humble sanctuary in the wilderness, I am sure you would pray here with as much fervour as if you were in one of your magnificent churches of Marseilles. I found the whole furniture of the house to consist of a few boxes which served for seats, five roughly-made chairs and three tables. I could not find in the whole establishment a sheet of letter paper wherewith to continue my correspondence with your lordship. The Fathers are driven to such shifts for want of writing paper, as to be obliged to register births and marriages as concisely as possible, in order to economise the few scraps still at their disposal.”

Mgr. Grandin attributes this scarcity of paper, and of other requisites, to a disaster in the previous year, when the greater portion of the supplies for those distant missions was swept away by the floods of a swollen river. This disaster happened under the eyes of Monseigneur Grandin, who nearly lost his own life in seeking to save supplies so much needed by the hard-working and isolated missionaries, who would have to endure severe privations for a whole

year, if deprived of them. The two Fathers who were then attached to St. Joseph's Mission were seldom to be found in residence there at the same time ; one or the other was generally engaged in missionary work in behalf of some Indian tribe, sometimes at a distance of three or four hundred miles. Shortly before the bishop arrived at St. Joseph's, on Great Slave Lake, Father Gascon came back from a prolonged visit to a tribe that was encamped far away. The place of their encampment was so difficult of access, that he could not use a sledge for the conveyance of his luggage and provisions. He was forced to carry, on his own shoulders, for hundreds of miles, a great portion of his effects ; an Indian who accompanied him carried the remaining portion. On the 26th of July 1861, the bishop left St. Joseph's Mission, for the Mission of the Sacred Heart of Mary on Big Island. This mission had been established two years previously by Father Grollier. Big Island lies at the head of Mackenzie River, at the point where it issues from Great Slave Lake. The bishop, accompanied by Brother Kearney, and his little sacristan, and two Indians, reached that island on the 30th of July. In crossing Great Slave Lake it was with difficulty they kept their canoe afloat, as the water was continually oozing in through its many leakages, placing their lives in continual peril. The bishop spent a week in the midst of the Indians of Big Island, at the close of which he embarked on the Mackenzie for Fort Simpson. At that time he was occupied with the project of establishing, somewhere on the banks of the Mackenzie, a mission which would be suitable as a place of rendezvous for the Indians, and which would serve as a central depôt for collecting supplies for the outlying missions of the Mackenzie regions. On the first evening of his sailing from Big Island, he and his little party drew ashore and encamped on a spot which, on further examination the next morning, seemed to be well adapted as a position for his projected establishment. After praying to God for light and guidance, he came to the resolution of founding a mission there, and of dedicating it to Divine Providence. He planted a large cross on a site on which he hoped to see afterwards a new church erected. His hopes

were fully realised. The Mission of Providence is now one of the most flourishing of the Oblate missions in those far off regions.

Proceeding with his voyage, he arrived at Fort Simpson on the 10th of August. Here he found an extraordinary gathering of divers nationalities. The death-stillness which habitually reigns around those lonely posts of the Hudson Bay Company, called "Forts," was disturbed at Fort Simpson on that occasion by a jargon of voices and a babel-like confusion of tongues. The ten large barges that had conveyed the furs purchased from the Indians to the Great Portage la Loche, had then just returned to Fort Simpson laden with merchandise. Each barge was manned by a crew composed of different nationalities. The traders and their families, and a large number of the employees of the company, were also assembled. The motley crowd was composed of English, Irish, Scotch, Canadians, Norwegians, Orcadians, Canadian half-breeds, and others. Among the Indians assembled were the Sauteux, the Maskegons, the Crees, the Slaves, the Dog-Ribs, the Montagnais, the Yellow-Knives, the Hareskins, the Sekanais, and some Esquimaux. Fathers Seguin and Gascon had accompanied the fleet of boats from Portage la Loche. With their assistance the bishop was able to begin a mission in regular form, in behalf both of the Indians and of the white men then assembled in such crowds at Fort Simpson. His lordship preached four times daily during the mission, twice in Montagnais and twice in French. He and Fathers Seguin and Gascon were almost continually employed, during the intervals between the sermons, in giving private instructions to Indians whom they were preparing for Baptism.

On the 20th of August, the bishop left Fort Simpson for the Mission of St. Raphael, at Fort Liard. From the Mackenzie he entered the river Liard. This river rises in the Rocky Mountains, and flows with great rapidity. The bishop's canoe had to face the strong current, the progress was consequently very slow and difficult. For four days they advanced between banks that rose precipitously from the water's edge to a height of four or five hundred feet.

Their lives were often exposed to grave peril during this journey, in consequence of the dangerous state of the sides of the over-hanging precipices. They frequently had hair-breadth escapes from the danger of being crushed to death beneath great masses of falling earth and loose rocks, that came rushing down upon them, without any previous warning, from the sides of the steep declivities.

On the evening of the 29th of August the party reached Fort Liard. They found a great number of Indians assembled, by whom they were very cordially welcomed, although many of them had never seen a priest before. The following day the bishop, aided by Father Gascon, commenced the exercises of a mission that brought grace and blessing to many a weary heart.

CHAPTER XIII.

RETURNING SOUTH TO ST. ALBERT.

WE pass over the rest of the history (sent to the Founder of the Oblates) of the travels and labours in the Mackenzie region, in the early sixties, of the Coadjutor Bishop of St. Boniface. He went as far north as Fort Good Hope, near the Arctic circle. At length he began his southern journey, in 1863.

The Mission of Providence had grown rapidly. Dr. Grandin decided on establishing there a community of Sisters of Charity. A convent had to be built. Father Grouard (Bishop since 1890) and Brother Alexis took upon themselves the chief labour of the construction. It was a two-storied house, the first of the sort raised in any part of those vast and desolate regions. It excited the surprise of the Indians, and served as another landmark of civilization in their midst. While the bishop was still at Providence he received the sad news of the death of Father Grollier. This news reached him on the eve of his commencing his journey further south, towards the mission of St. Albert, where he was to fix his abode. Alluding to this occasion, Monseigneur Grandin writes :—

“ I spent the night weeping and praying, and arranging my plans for the future. At four in the morning I commenced my journey. I felt a double sadness weighing upon me as I took my departure. I mourned over the painful news of Father Grollier’s death, and was grieved at bidding good bye to the members of the devoted community I was quitting.”

On the arrival of Bishop Grandin at St. Albert, he received the following letter from a Protestant gentleman, of the Hudson Bay Company :—

“ It was with the greatest pleasure I received your lordship’s letter, on your return from your long sojourn in the north. There I witnessed with my own eyes, how gloriously you imitated the example of your illustrious prototype, St. Paul, labouring with your own hands ; and, in season and out of season, preaching to pagans the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The noble self-abnegation, the calm and the admirable energy with which you bore up against difficulties, conquered obstacles, and endured sufferings of an exceptional nature, are beyond all praise. For my own part, although I have spent fifteen years in these savage regions, and have seen and experienced in my own person many of the vicissitudes of a life in the extreme north, nevertheless, I would not dare to face sufferings and privations so protracted, so multiplied, so continual, as those which your lordship had to endure on the borders of the Mackenzie river. Your friends in the distance would indeed be surprised, could they have seen you, as I have done, in your ‘ palace,’ constructed with some rough trunks of trees, piled one upon another to the height of six or seven feet, and lighted through small apertures covered with pieces of coarse parchment, which were its only windows—its floor being the frozen ground—its door consisting of planks hastily put together, through which the wind and the snow easily penetrated ; whilst your lordship’s daily food was of a kind which the menial servant in France would reject with disdain. Could your friends in Europe further be acquainted, as I am, with the hardships you had frequently to endure, in traversing immense regions in a state bordering upon continual hunger, with no other companions but poor savages, who had not an idea or sentiment drawn from civilized life, they could not help shedding tears of tender compassion over a life of such suffering and privation. Your unwearied patience, and your dauntless courage, have excited the admiration of all the officers of the district. I have heard with sincere regret of the premature death of

Father Grollier. I ever found in him an agreeable companion, full of zeal for the discharge of his duties. Such have been all your missionaries with whom I have had relations. The esteem and affection which I entertain for some of these gentlemen, will remain among the happiest remembrances of my residence in this country."

Monseigneur Grandin himself declared to [Father Cooke] the writer of these pages, that for a whole year at a time he had not the opportunity of tasting bread, or meat, or vegetables. Fish, and that often very bad, was the only food which he and the poor savages he was evangelizing, had to live upon.

An important change, in the meantime, had been made in the diocese of St. Boniface. The northern division, consisting of the Athabasca and Mackenzie regions, was placed under Bishop Faraud, as Vicar Apostolic. The Saskatchewan region was assigned to Monseigneur Grandin, as Bishop of St. Albert. The Red River settlement remained under the pastoral rule of Monseigneur Taché.

At St. Albert, the place of residence of Monseigneur Grandin, we find the seeds of christianity and civilization growing apace, under the judicious and fostering care of his lordship and the missionary Fathers under his jurisdiction. In a work entitled *Ocean to Ocean*, written by a Protestant clergyman, the Rev. G. Grant, of Halifax, who was Secretary to the Expedition of the Engineer-in-Chief of the Canadian and Pacific Railway, the following passage appears :—

" Crossing the Sturgeon river, a hill rose before us crowned with the Cathedral Church of the Mission, the house of the Bishop, and the house of the Sisters of Charity ; while up and down the river extended the little houses and farms of settlers. We called on Bishop Grandin, and found him at home, with six or seven of his clergy, who fortunately happened to be in from various missions. The bishop and his staff received us with hearty welcome, showed us round the church and schools, and introduced us to the Sisters. The church represents an extraordinary amount of labour

and ingenuity, when it is considered that there is not a saw-mill in the country, and that every plank had to be made with a hand-saw. The altar is a beautiful piece of wood-work in the early Norman style, executed as a labour of love by two of the Fathers. The sacristy behind was the original log church, and is still used for service in the winter. The St. Albert Mission was formed about nine years ago. It numbered nearly a thousand. Then came the small-pox that raged in every Indian camp, and wherever men were assembled, all up and down the Saskatchewan. Three hundred died at St. Albert ; men and women fled from their nearest and dearest. The priests and sisters toiled with that devotedness, that is a matter of course with them ; nursed the sick, shrived the dying, and gathered many of the orphans into their house. The scourge passed away, but the infant settlement had received a severe blow from which it is only beginning to recover. Many are the discouragements, material and moral, of the Fathers, in their labours, as they frankly confessed. Their congregation is migratory, spends half the year at home, and the other half on the plains. Their children are only sent to school when there is no buffalo to hunt, no pemmican to make, or no work of greater importance than education to set them to. The Sisters took us to their orphanage ; they have twenty-four children in it, chiefly girls, two-thirds of the number half-breeds, the rest Blackfeet or Crees, who have been picked up in tents beside their dead parents, abandoned by the tribe when smitten by small-pox. The gentle Christian courtesy, and lady-like manners of the Sisters at the mission, charmed us, while the knowledge of the devoted lives they lead, must impress with profound respect Protestant and Roman Catholic alike. Each one would have adorned a home of her own, but she had given up all for the sake of her Lord and His little ones. After being entertained by the bishop to an excellent supper, and hearing the orphans sing, we were obliged to hurry away in order to camp before dark."

CHAPTER XIV.

“ IF I HAD A POTATO ! ”

HENRY GROLLIER, of whom mention has been made, was the first Oblate of Mary Immaculate to make the sacrifice of his life to God in the North-west. From the earliest stages of his ecclesiastical life, he manifested an ardent thirst to gain souls to God. During his novitiate, which he made at Notre Dame de l'Osier, in Dauphiny, he was often heard to exclaim : “ *Da mihi animas* ”—“ Give me souls.” He entered the Society of the Oblates of Mary, with the hope of being one day chosen for their Indian missions in North America. He completed his theological studies in the Seminary of Marseilles where for three years he had the happiness of being near to the holy Founder of the Oblates of Mary, and of imbibing his spirit. He was ordained priest by Monseigneur de Mazenod, who selected him to be the companion of Monseigneur Taché, on his return to St. Boniface, after his consecration. On Father Grollier's arrival at the Red River, he was appointed missionary in the distant region of Athabaska. Here his prodigious zeal soon began to manifest itself. His holy ambition was to evangelize tribes, to whom the tidings of salvation had not yet been communicated. He pushed his missionary expeditions far into the Arctic circle. There he met tribes of Esquimaux and Indians, to whom he was the first to speak of God and His Divine Son. He quickly mastered their languages, and brought his missionary influence to bear on their benighted souls. A blessing, like to that which fell on the preaching of the apostles on the day of Pentecost, seemed to accompany his labours. A few weeks spent by him in the midst of a pagan tribe sufficed to prepare it for the blessing of Christianity.

One of the most difficult passions to master in savage breasts, is the spirit of revenge. Terrible are the outbreaks of that passion, especially when hostile tribes encounter one another in the solitude of the desert. Woe then to the weaker side. That solitary missionary, with his uplifted cross, had the marvellous power of holding back, again and again, armed warriors rushing to their revenge, and of causing rival and hostile tribes to cast down their weapons of war, and to smoke the pipe of peace. In a letter to a brother missionary, dated from the banks of the Mackenzie, he writes thus :—

“ Last autumn I met, for the first time, at Peel River, the tribes of the Loucheux and the Esquimaux. They had already been at war with one another, and the thirst of vengeance was still fierce in their breasts. On the morning of the 14th of September [1860], the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, I planted a cross in a prominent place, and invited the Indians of both camps to assemble around it. I then requested the chief of each tribe to come forward, and join hands at the foot of the cross, in sign of their mutual reconciliation. My hands pressed theirs together upon the feet of the crucifix, and I made them promise to love one another for the future. Thus the Cross became the bond of fraternal union between me, who was born on the shores of the Mediterranean, and these poor inhabitants of the desolate coasts of the Polar sea. I presented the chief of the Esquimaux with an image of Our Lord on the Cross, with these words written at the foot of it : ‘ *All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*’ And to the chief of the Loucheux I gave a picture of the Blessed Virgin, on which I wrote : ‘ *Behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me Blessed.*’ That day I had the happiness of baptizing my first neophyte from the nation of the Esquimaux.

“ I returned to Fort Good Hope before the Mackenzie became frozen. My little canoe was constructed of whale skin. During this voyage I had an opportunity of experiencing with what loving care Divine Providence watches over the lives of missionaries. Three days before we arrived at the

Fort, we consumed our last morsel of food. The two Indians who conducted the canoe informed me that we had nothing more to eat. It was the eve of the Feast of the Holy Angels. In reciting Vespers, these words of the divine office struck me forcibly : '*He has given His Angels charge over thee.*' I thought then within myself, that I was the servant of Him who once suffered hunger in the desert, and that I also should be succoured by the Holy Angels. My hope was not disappointed. The next morning we perceived traces of blood on the banks of the river. 'Look !' I exclaimed, 'we have our breakfast.' It was so. Following those traces, we soon discovered two quarters of a reindeer, which must have been killed the previous day by some passing Indians, who, taking the portion they required, left the remainder to fall into our hands."

Father Grollier established a mission at Fond du Lac, the eastern extremity of Lake Athabaska, which he dedicated to Our Lady of the Seven Dolours. He founded a Mission at Fort Rae, which he dedicated to St. Michael, and also a mission for the Slave tribes of Big Island, which he dedicated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and a mission at Fort Norman dedicated to St. Teresa

He was the first who evangelized the tribe of the Hare-skins, or Peaux de Lièvre, a tribe which frequents Fort Good Hope. He dedicated that mission to Our Lady of Good Hope. Finally he advanced northwards as far as Peel river, among the nations of the Loucheux and the Esquimaux ; he dedicated a residence there to the Holy Name of Mary. He could go no further : his physical power failed him. Whilst engaged in those wonderful missionary labours, the success and extent of which recall the days of St. Francis Xavier, he was suffering from chronic asthma, which was to carry him to an early grave.

Being a native of Montpellier, in the South of France, it was marvellous how he lived and worked amidst the terrible rigours of twelve polar winters. When he felt his death-illness coming on, he was alone in the far northern wilderness, with his Indians whom he loved so dearly. Hundreds of miles separated him from his nearest brother-

priest. On that occasion he thus wrote to Monseigneur Grandin :—

“ I feel that the hand of death is upon me ; I hope however that I shall not die, without having an opportunity of making my confession ; but if I cannot go to confession, I have a peaceful trust in the goodness of God, that He will show me mercy. I am now a useless being. I can no longer be counted among the active workmen of God’s vineyard. Nevertheless, you must not be too anxious about me. I suffer, it is true, from asthma ; but this malady, which is hereditary in my family, has not prevented many of my relatives living to a ripe old age. I think if I were at some post where I could get occasionally a little milk and a few potatoes, I should have a chance of recovering my health.”

In a subsequent letter he renounced the thought of seeking for a milder climate, or a place where he could procure the nourishment and remedies which his condition demanded. He again writes to Monseigneur Grandin :—

“ I will not quit my present position, unless you positively command me to do so, for I desire nothing more ardently than to die at my post. I can still render some little services here ; I know these poor savages, and they know me. It would grieve me very much to be obliged to forsake them.”

To the great consolation of the dying young missionary, Father Seguin arrived in time, to cheer him, and to help him to sanctify his last days on earth. It had been arranged before his last illness commenced, that a large cross, forty feet in height, should be erected opposite the door of his hut. He wished the ceremony of blessing and erecting it to be performed by Father Seguin. He asked to be led to a window, from which he could witness the erection of the cross. When it was completed, he said to Father Seguin : “ Father, now I die contented. I have seen the standard of my Saviour planted at the end of the earth. I am happy—so happy, that I wept tears of joy during the whole ceremony.”

The news of the approaching end of their apostle and their father caused grief and consternation in the camp of the Indians. They assembled in great crowds around the spot where he lay dying. Though he wished to be left quiet, he could not refuse to allow group after group to approach his bed-side, and receive his blessing and his last words of advice. At last Father Seguin had to give strict orders that no more visitors were to be admitted, to disturb him. Father Seguin having intimated to him that he purposed to have him buried on the spot where the projected new church was to be erected, "No, no," he replied, "bury me with the Indians, between the last two who died, with my face turned towards the cross." During his agony, his eyes were often fixed on the image of St. Joseph dying in the arms of Jesus and Mary. The last time that Father Seguin approached his bed, Father Grollier said to him, with a smile: "Now I see heaven, where I shall have the happiness soon to ascend." These were amongst his last words.

Thus died the first Oblate of Mary whose death took place in the far North West of America. He died in the greatest poverty, without doctor, without remedy of any sort; the luxury of a cup of milk, or of a few potatoes, could not be procured for him, during his long illness, in that desolate region. We may feel sure a bright crown awaited him in heaven, whose life was spent in such heroic and successful efforts to instruct others unto justice.

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE DIOCESE OF ST. ALBERT.

SIR WILLIAM BUTLER, in *The Great Lone Land*, writes :—

“ A few miles north-west of Edmonton, a settlement [St. Albert] composed exclusively of French half-breeds, is situated on the shores of a rather extensive lake which bears the name of Grand Lac. This settlement is presided over by a mission of French Roman Catholic clergymen of the order of Oblates, headed by a bishop of the same order and nationality. It is a curious contrast to find in this distant and strange land, men of culture and high mental excellence, devoting their lives to the task of civilizing the wild Indians of the forest and the prairie—going far in advance of the settler, whose advent they have but too much cause to dread. . . . Only a poor semblance of a man can behold such a sight through the narrow glass of sectarian feeling, and see in it nothing but the self-interested labour of persons holding opinions foreign to his own. He who has travelled through the vast colonial empire of Britain—that empire which covers one-third of the entire habitable surface of the globe, and probably half of the lone lands of the world—must often have met with men dwelling in the midst of wild, savage peoples, whom they tended with a strange and mother-like devotion. If you asked who was this stranger who dwelt thus among wild men in these lone places, you were told he was the French missionary ; and if you sought him in his lonely hut, you found ever the same surroundings, the same simple evidences of a faith which seemed more than human. I do not speak from hearsay or book-knowledge. I

have myself witnessed the scenes I now try to recall. And it has ever been the same; East and West, far in advance of trader or merchant, of sailor or soldier, has gone this dark-haired, fragile man, whose earliest memories are thick with sunny scenes by bank of Loire, or vine-clad slope of Rhone or Garonne, and whose vision, in this life at least, is never destined to rest again upon these oft-remembered places. . . . To these French missionaries at Grand Lac I was the bearer of terrible tidings. I carried to them the story of Sedan, the overwhelming rush of armed Germany into the heart of France—the closing of the high-schooled hordes of Teuton savagery around Paris: all *that* was hard home news to hear. Fate has leant heavily upon that little congregation; out of 900 souls more than 300 had perished of small-pox up to the date of my arrival, and others were still sick in the huts along the lake. Well might the bishop and his priests bow their heads in the midst of such manifold tribulations of death and disaster.”

* * * * *

“During the days spent in the Mountain House [Rocky Mountain House, a trading post in the present Alberta], I enjoyed the society of the most enterprising and best informed missionary in the Indian countries—M. Lacombe. This gentleman, a native of Lower Canada, has devoted himself for more than twenty years to the Blackfeet and Crees of the far West, sharing their sufferings, their hunts, their summer journeys, and their winter camps—sharing even, unwillingly, their war forays and night assaults. The devotion which he has evinced towards these poor wild warriors has not been thrown away upon them, and Père Lacombe is the only man who can pass and repass from Blackfoot camp to Cree camp with perfect impunity when these long-lasting enemies are at war.”

To St. Albert one day came, to the surprise of the Fathers, a deputation from the war-like tribe of the Blackfeet, who up to that time had given but little hopes of their conversion to Christianity. The tribe had been smitten with

the dread scourge of small-pox. The object of the deputation was to invite Father Lacombe, who, notwithstanding their being pagans, was well known to them, to accompany them to their camp. He had just then returned from a distant and very difficult mission among the Cree tribes. Although he was greatly fatigued, he set out at once on his visit to the plague-stricken tribe of the Blackfeet. Thus the foundation was laid of that marvellous influence he afterwards was to exercise over that warrior race. Before his return to St. Albert he had the happiness of baptizing four hundred persons of that tribe.

The following letter, written by him to the Superior-General, after a visit to the Cree tribe, will show how well he knew how to combine the functions of the spiritual with those of the temporal husbandman, and how to intermingle the sowing of the seed of the bread that perisheth, with that of the Heavenly bread that springeth up to life everlasting. He writes :—

“ At the end of May I went up the river Saskatchewan, until I reached the newly-founded mission of St. Paul. There, crowds of Indians were awaiting me. Their object was to make, under my direction, their first attempt in sowing barley and potatoes.”

The good Father had, with great difficulty, conveyed to that spot, a plough and other farm implements, together with a supply of different sorts of seeds. He continues :—

“ In two hours after my arrival my plough was yoked, and all was in readiness to begin operations. I was the only white man present. Two Indians led the oxen, I handled the plough. You could not have helped smiling, had you been there, to see the amateur ploughman, surrounded and followed by several hundred Indians, men, women and children, who stared with amazement as they beheld the ploughshare furrowing so easily and rapidly the surface of the ground. After a few days I succeeded in tilling a considerable surface. I then divided the tilled ground into

little square patches, one of which I assigned to each family. I spent thus several weeks with my newly-trained agricultural labourers, many of whom were Christians, and several others were under instruction. At last we had to separate ; the time for buffalo-hunting, which is their only means of supporting themselves, had commenced. I was grieved to have to leave them, as they seemed so well disposed and so full of kind feeling for me. I promised to visit them again in the course of the summer."

Father Lacombe having spent some months at St. Albert, set out again to visit the Crees. Finding that they had not returned to St. Paul's Mission, he went to seek them in the buffalo hunting grounds. They received him with great manifestations of joy. He then commenced a mission amongst them, the exercises of which he thus describes :—

" In the morning, after my private devotions, I assembled the women in the middle of the camp. I taught them their prayers and several hymns, and gave them an instruction ; they then returned to their occupations, and I proceeded to visit the sick ; after which work of charity I visited those who were unwilling to come to the instructions, or in other words, who were unwilling to pray. I listened to the different objections they had to offer, and answered them. I afterwards had to act as Justice of the Peace, to arrange their differences and disputes with one another. About noon I rang my little bell to bring the children together. Their eagerness to come to my instructions consoled me very much. In a few moments I was surrounded by crowds of little Indians, who loved me as their father, and who joined with me in singing hymns with all the vigour of their lungs. After this exercise I withdrew into a neighbouring wood to enjoy a little quiet, and to have an opportunity of performing my private devotions. I then resumed my round of visits to those poor savages that I had failed to see in the morning. In the evening I brought the men together and preached to them ; after which I entered into conversation with them, and each one asked

whatever questions he pleased with reference to our holy religion, whilst leisurely smoking his 'calumet,' or long Indian pipe. On Sundays all assisted together at the Holy Mass, the Rosary, and other exercises of piety. It was thus that day after day was spent during the six weeks I remained there. In the meantime the crops ripened at St. Paul's, and the Indians, on their return from their hunting fields, were delighted with the success of their first agricultural enterprise, and encouraged to renew the experiment."

Father Lacombe, in obedience to the wishes of Monseigneur Taché, renewed his visit to the tribe of the Blackfeet. On the occasion of that visit, the life of this apostolic priest was exposed to imminent danger, from which the hand of God alone rescued him. We will allow him to tell his own story:—

"In the camp of the Blackfeet I was lodged in the tent of the great chief of the tribe. His name was Natous, which signifies the Sun. The tribe was divided into three camps. The camp in which I was located was composed of forty-five lodges, in a second camp there were fifty, and in a third there were sixty lodges. I give you these details in order that you may be the better able to picture to yourself the frightful scene which I am now about to describe.

"On the day of my arrival, I earnestly urged the Blackfeet to unite the three camps into one, as a precaution against an attack, that might be made upon them, by some hostile tribe. My advice, however, was not followed. On the evening of the 4th of December, having finished the religious service for the men, night prayers having been said, and the usual hymns sung, each one withdrew to his own lodge for the night. I remained alone with the chief and his family in their lodge.

"I lay down on my humble couch to take the repose I needed. Alas! I had no idea that at that hour a host of enemies were lying in ambush all around us, concealed in the wood, who were only waiting for our fires to be extinguished to rush upon us in the darkness. They were

about a thousand in all, and were composed of the Assiniboines, the Sauteux, and the Crees, who had come from the borders of the Beaver River.

"We were all buried in profound sleep; suddenly Natous sprang from his bed, and in a lugubrious tone cried out—'Assina, Assina—the Crees, the Crees.' He had scarcely uttered these words, when a sudden discharge of musketry took place and showers of balls pierced our lodges from every side. The lodge in which I was, being the chief's, was more conspicuous and exposed to the fire, than any other; but, I must say, that the attacking tribes were quite ignorant of the fact of my being in the camp of the Blackfeet at the time, for our Indians (even though pagans) would never dare to attack a camp, if they knew a priest to be in it.

"My beloved Father, I cannot tell you all I suffered that terrible night. I seized my cassock, and dressed quickly. I kissed my crucifix, and made an offering of my life to God. I then hung at my side the bag that contained the holy oils, in order to be prepared to give Extreme Unction to the dying. All the time, bullets were whizzing through the air. I advanced in front of the enemy's lines, hoping to be recognized; but my efforts to attract their attention were fruitless. The din and confusion that prevailed, prevented them noticing me. It would be hard to describe the horrors of that scene. The night was pitch dark; the lurid flashes of the musketry were the only lights visible. The war shouts of the contending tribes, and the rallying voices of their chieftains, mingled in frightful discord with the cries of despair of the wounded and the dying, with the wailing of women and the screams of terrified children, who knew not whither to fly for safety. Added to these horrible noises were the loud neighing of the horses and the wild howlings of the dogs. To increase our misery, we had only a few men to defend us, as the greater number had gone to the hunting plains.

"If God had not, in an especial manner, protected us, not one of us would have escaped with his life. When I found that it was impossible to make known to the assailants the fact of my being present, and thereby to stop the carnage,

I urged the chiefs of the Blackfeet courageously to defend their people, even though it might cost them their lives. For my own part, I hastened to attend to the wounded and the dying. As I passed near these poor fallen and bleeding Indians, they grasped at my cassock, or seized my hand in theirs, unwilling to loose their hold of me, crying out at the same time, '*Kimmo Kinnan, dgimo hekkat!*' 'Have pity upon us! Pray for us!'

"The first victim whom I met was a young woman; she fell mortally wounded at my feet, at the moment she was leaving her lodge. I stooped down at once and asked her if she wished to die a Christian, to which she replied in the affirmative. By the flashes of the musketry I was, fortunately, able to see near me a vessel full of water, a portion of which I poured upon her head and baptized her. In a few moments after, the enemy rushed into her lodge and mercilessly scalped her as she lay dying.

"Twenty-five lodges were in all destroyed. I lost everything with the exception of my breviary. In the meantime, the fighting men of the other camps of the Blackfeet hearing of the attack, came to our help. Thus reinforced, we repelled three attempts of the enemy to capture our camp. I awaited daybreak with impatience; I felt that dreadful night to be painfully long. In the morning I vested myself in surplice and stole, and holding in one hand a crucifix, and in the other a flag of truce, I advanced between the combatants. The Blackfeet ceased firing, but the Crees not seeing me, owing to a thick mist, continued still to discharge their weapons. Whilst I was vainly seeking to attract their notice, bullets were falling like hail around me. At last, a bullet, which most likely had rebounded from the ground, struck me, first on the shoulder and then on the forehead. I staggered under the shock, but did not fall. A cry was raised by the Blackfeet, 'You have wounded the Priest,' which, when the Crees heard, they immediately answered, 'We did not know the Priest was with you; we will cease fighting.' Nearly one hundred fell that night, killed and wounded.

"After the battle, the Blackfeet came in crowds to embrace and to thank me. They said there must be some-

thing more than human about me, as the bullets seemed to have no power of hurting me. Ah ! perhaps God wished to make manifest to those poor pagans, His power and His goodness towards those who put their trust in Him, and to show them the fulfilment of those words of the Psalmist, *'His truth will compass thee with a shield. Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror of the night, or of the arrow that flieth in the day.'*

" In the pillage of the camp I lost all I possessed, clothes, blankets, my horses—everything. I had not wherewith to cover my head, or to protect myself from the intense cold of the season.

" The day following the battle, notwithstanding our being fatigued and worn out by the sufferings we had passed through, we were compelled to set out upon a journey of twenty miles to join another camp of the Blackfeet, with whom I remained for ten days. At the end of that time I prepared to return to the Fort of the Mountain [Mountain House]. To reach that point was not easy. I was poorly clad, the cold was intense, and the snow was very deep. During the six days the journey lasted, I suffered in turn from hunger, cold, and fatigue. When I reached the Fort, Mr. Hardisty, the representative of the Hudson Bay Company, and his family, came to meet me. This gentleman could not help shedding tears on witnessing my wretched and impoverished condition. He supplied me with clothes, and provided me with the best and most nutritious food he could procure. He treated me as kindly as if I were his own father. Under the cheering influence of a hospitality so kind and generous, I soon forgot the severe mental and bodily sufferings through which I had lately passed."

A few months later on we find Father Lacombe rendering to a forlorn band of Indians, whom he met near the river Saskatchewan, services still more striking than those he has just spoken of, as rendered to himself. These Indians belonged to the nation of the Blackfeet. They were the remnant of a tribe that had been overpowered by the superior numbers of a hostile band. They had been robbed of everything, and when he met them they had been

without food for three days, and were almost naked. Some had been severely wounded, and their wounds were still undressed. Father Lacombe's compassionate heart was deeply moved at sight of all this misery, and he could not refrain from tears. He gave them all his provisions—he washed and bound up their wounds—he clad some in his own warm clothing, reducing himself to a condition almost as wretched as that in which he found them. Moreover, he lent them his two horses, and continued his journey on foot to St. Albert.

After such deeds of self-sacrificing charity in their behalf, we need not be surprised at the holy sway he exercised in their midst.

On a subsequent occasion, as he was journeying alone he suddenly came upon an aged and dying Indian. He was a pagan. Father Lacombe's zeal, aided by Divine grace, succeeded in rescuing from infidelity the soul of this dying man. Shortly before his death, he asked him: "Do you love God?" The dying Indian, fetching a deep sigh, exclaimed: "Would that I had known Him sooner!" What were those words but the echoes of those once spoken by St. Augustin: "O Beauty, ever ancient and ever new, too late have I known Thee, too late have I loved Thee!"

This latter circumstance was related to Father Cooke by Father Lacombe himself, when that devoted missionary visited Europe, after his residence of nearly a quarter of a century amidst the Red Indians of North America.

One of the chief difficulties experienced by the Oblate Missionaries among the Red Indian tribes, was the complete want of books of any sort to help in learning their languages. Father Lacombe directed his great literary capabilities to the remedying of this want. He composed a dictionary and grammar of the Cree language, which is spoken by several large tribes. For twenty years he laboured at these works, having no materials to draw from but the sounds of the words as he heard them spoken in the Cree tribes.

Father Lacombe, during his long missionary career amidst

the tribes of British North America, had two leading objects ever before his mind ; first, their spiritual regeneration, and secondly, their introduction into such habits of civilized life as they were capable of adopting. To each of these great objects he devoted himself with the zeal of an apostle. We have given some pages of his missionary life. These are only fragments of a great circle of labours and privations, embracing a period which began in 1849, and is not yet ended in 1913.

The Earl of Southesk, in his work, *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains*, speaks of Father Lacombe, whom he visited at Lake St. Anne, to the west of St. Albert.

It was the intrepid missionary, Father Lacombe, whose cart-wheels first traced out a possible road over the 1,200 miles of forest, and swamp, and prairie, which separate the Saskatchewan plain from the Fort Garry which he knew—the present city of Winnipeg.

In seeking to promote the spread of civilization among the Indian tribes which they evangelize, the Oblate Missionaries are but acting in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the instructions given them by Monseigneur de Mazenod, and inserted by him in their code of rules, from which we extract the following passages :—

“ It should not be considered as something foreign to the spirit of our ministry, to labour in forming the nomad tribes of the woods and prairies to habits of civilized life. On the contrary, the members of our society should look upon the civilization of those tribes as a powerful adjunct to their missionary work, and as a means of rendering their ministry more fruitful of solid good. Therefore they will use all their influence to withdraw such tribes from their nomad life, and to induce them to choose some place of settlement, there to build fixed residences, and to become tillers of the soil, or to devote themselves to some other industry of civilized life. Superiors should seek to develop in young subjects, destined to be employed in our foreign missions, such personal special aptitudes as each one may possess, which afterwards might be available in promoting some branch of civilization in those pagan

lands. Superiors should select also lay-brothers who are skilled in the mechanical arts to become the auxiliaries of the Fathers in the work of instructing and civilizing the wandering tribes. A good school, in which solid religious instruction and secular education will be imparted, should be established in every mission. The missionaries should endeavour to promote not only the spiritual, but also the temporal well-being of the tribes. They should foster peace and charity between tribe and tribe, and between all members of the same tribe. They should endeavour to form them to habits of thrift and industry, and to a prudent laying by of savings for future wants. They should never become themselves the chiefs of tribes. They will not interfere with the freedom of each tribe to choose its own chief, further than by encouraging and advising them to give their suffrages to a worthy candidate, who would be likely to govern according to the laws of religion and justice, and to promote the temporal welfare of the tribe."

CHAPTER XVI.

SOME MOVING INCIDENTS : COLD ; HUNGER ; SICKNESS ; PRAIRIE FIRE.

LOUIS DAZÉ was not a professed Oblate of Mary, but he was a devoted associate, who sought no recompense beyond food and raiment for his priceless services. A Canadian by birth, and a carpenter by trade, for twenty long years he devoted himself to the task of aiding, in every way within the scope of his capabilities, the great work of the Oblate missions in the wild north. By sharing in the labours of the missionaries, he looked forward to the happiness of partaking of their heavenly recompense. His was a joyous, affectionate nature, and often did his gentle and winning cheerfulness beguile the tediousness of the encampment in the wilderness, when he acted as guide and companion to some missionary Father. At the end of October 1873, he accompanied Father Scollen, a young Irish Oblate Priest, to a mission which he was to give to a tribe of Blackfeet. The place where the mission was to be given lay at a distance of twenty-five days' journey from St. Albert. About the end of November the supply of food began to run short among the Indians and it became necessary to send out a body of hunters to the chase of the buffalo. The horses belonging to the Fathers at St. Albert of which Louis Dazé had charge, were also dispatched to the hunting grounds, which lay at a distance of some eighty miles from the place of the mission. In the evening, on the assembling of the hunters at the place which had been fixed on for their encampment, it was discovered that several of the horses were missing. In the afternoon of that day a violent snow tempest had unexpectedly broken out which marred considerably the progress of the chase. The horses were

lost during the snow storm. When Louis Dazé discovered that some of the horses could not be found, he resolved to go, without delay, in search of them. They had been entrusted to his charge, and he was determined that none of them should be lost. The storm continued still to rage and to gain in fury ; the fresh snow was deepening on the ground, and defacing every track and land mark. An Assiniboine, before turning in to his camp bed for the night, made an attempt to collect the horses together, but he had succeeded in finding only five or six, when he had to beat a hasty retreat to his tent, before the terrific violence of the blinding storm of snow. The trusty Canadian asked if all the horses had been found, and on receiving a negative reply, he went out at once himself in search of the missing ones. " It is useless for you," cried out the Assiniboine, " to go in search of the horses ; you will not find them, and certain death awaits you if you stray from the tent." Louis Dazé was a man without fear, when he felt he had a duty to fulfil. During the score of years which he had spent in those regions, he had in his travels been exposed to dangers and difficulties of every sort, out of all of which, through his energy and skill, aided by God's blessing, he succeeded in escaping. Now he feels compelled, by a sense of duty, to expose himself anew to risk and peril, to fulfil what he believes to be an obligation. The next morning when the Indians awoke they found themselves half dead with cold, and covered with four feet of fresh snow which had fallen during the night. They looked around for Louis Dazé, but he was nowhere to be found. They set out in search of him, and traversed the surrounding prairie in all directions for fourteen days, seeking to find him, but it was all in vain. At last they returned to the mission. When they broke the afflicting news to Father Scollen, the grief of this good Father was indescribable. He loved Louis Dazé very much, and was inconsolable at his loss. He resolved to go forth himself the following morning in search of the poor Canadian's remains. The next day, as he was about departing on his mournful expedition, an Indian came to him in haste to say that the body of Louis Dazé had been found on the

banks of the river du Coude [no doubt, Elbow river] at a distance of four days' journey from the camp, and that he had brought it in on his sledge.

Louis Dazé was a man full of faith and fervour. It was his custom to approach the Sacraments every fortnight. He had received Holy Communion a few days before he left the camp to which he was never to return. When his body was discovered, he had his hands crossed upon his breast holding his scapular. On his cheek were frozen tears, we may presume they were tears of contrition and of love. He must have been some six or seven days wandering without food. And what gave an additional feature of sadness to the manner of his death was, that five minutes' further walking would have conducted him to the brow of a hill, at the foot of which a tribe of friendly Indians were encamped. But his earthly mission was accomplished, and the hour had come for the faithful servant to be called home to his reward.

The sheltering of the orphan is one of the good works of true charity. At St. Albert we find an orphanage springing up under the fostering care and active surveillance of the Fathers of that mission. The history of some of those poor little Indians, to whom the doors of the new orphanage were first opened, is sad and touching in the extreme. One little orphan of the Blackfeet tribe was found abandoned in the prairie, and lying on the dead body of his mother, who had died of small-pox. Another little boy, who was under six years of age, tells thus his own story :—

“ Our camp, of six lodges, was far away in the prairie. All in the camp were attacked by small-pox and died. My father was the last who died. I was left alone, and was very much afraid. I remained by myself in the camp for several days, and lived upon dried fish, but the smell from the dead bodies was making me sick ; I could stop there no longer. I closed the door of the lodge, and put branches of trees against it to prevent the dogs and the wolves devouring the body of my father. I took with me some dried fish and departed. I found a horse on the way, which, by standing on the trunk of a fallen tree, I was able to

mount. I travelled on for many days, not knowing where I was going. At night I used to tie my horse to a tree, and sleep on the ground myself. The wild dogs continued to follow me, and I dreaded very much that they would eat me up. They discovered where I had concealed my fish at night, and devoured it all. I also lost my horse. I wandered about for several days and had nothing to eat, nor had I anything to drink, for all the water was frozen. I suffered also very much from the cold, for I could not kindle a fire. At last two Indians found me, and brought me to the Father who was in the prairie, and he led me hither."

These simple and touching stories will suffice to show from what depths of misery the orphans at St. Albert were rescued, scarcely one of whom had not been a great sufferer in some way, before being received under the sheltering roof of that institution.

Father Fourmond makes mention of a half-breed, Paul Fayans, and his wife, who were devout Christians. God was about to call the latter to Himself; but it would seem that in His divine goodness He chose to prepare the mind of the humble and pious husband for the sacrifice He was going to demand of him, by favouring him with a holy vision, of which Paul thus speaks to Father Fourmond:—

"My Father, last night in my sleep it seemed to me that I beheld heaven open. Oh, how grand and beautiful it was! What beautiful lodges! What beautiful trees! What beautiful angels! I then beheld an immense train of light, of all the colours of the rainbow, descend to the earth. Near to the spot where it touched the ground sat a woman with veiled face. At that moment a voice spoke to me from on high, saying, '*She whom thou beholdest will soon ascend by this pathway of light into the glory of the Great Spirit.*'"

A few days after, Paul's wife, one of the best and holiest women in the colony, took ill, and after twelve days of excruciating sufferings, which she bore with admirable

patience, died the death of the saints. Shortly after her death, Paul, holding in his arms his little child of six months, met Father Fourmond, and said to him :—

“ Ah, my Father, God is very good. He had given me the best of wives, I was not worthy to possess her. He has called her from me to His own bright paradise. I thank Him with my whole heart, and I thank Him further for having prepared me for this trial, by showing me beforehand what was going to happen.”

Another instance of the same kind presented itself shortly after. A little boy of eight or nine years of age, the son of the chief of the tribe, Louison Montagnais, said one day in serious tones to his father :—

“ My father, the path by which I soon shall have to travel has been shown to me. It leads to the beautiful house of the Great Spirit. He who pointed out this bright path to me, said, however, that if I chose I could still remain with you.”

Louison was a man of strong faith and tender piety. His eyes filled with tears in hearing such words spoken by this child. He answered him thus :—

“ My dear child, you know that I love you, and that I would wish you to remain with me ; but still, I would prefer your going to the beautiful house of the Great Spirit. I will not be an obstacle to your happiness. Follow then the bright path which was shown to you.”

“ But father, I have something more to say to you,” said the pious child, “ I am not to be the first to depart from life. The path by which I have to travel is very short, I shall soon get to the end ; but my mother will have to travel by a longer way. It is she who will have to go first. I shall follow her after some days, and then we shall meet again. In proof of what I now say to you, I will recite my prayers in French ; you know I have never said them in that language. He who showed me the path has taught me.”

The child then said his prayers aloud in correct French,

and everything happened as he had predicted. His mother's death first took place, and in the course of a few days he followed her to the grave and to Heaven.

Father Fourmond had been the Principal of a college in France, before he joined the Society of the Oblates of Mary. Having contributed to the forming of the vocation of several of the students of his college for that society, he himself finally entered its ranks, with the object of being allowed to labour in the Indian missions of North America. His desire was complied with. At the period about which we write, he was engaged in the quiet and congenial work of Professor to some young Oblate students. At the same time, he laboured with devoted zeal among the half-breeds and the Indians in that locality. At that time the dreaded scourge of Indian tribes, the small-pox, was raging at St. Albert. One-third of the little colony were dying or dead. Two of the Fathers were lying prostrate there, one suffering from small-pox, and the other worn out by his incessant labours among the sick and dying. The time was already far advanced for the Indians to go to the Great Prairie. They were threatened, if they remained much longer at St. Albert, with the horrors of famine, in addition to those of the plague. On the other hand, it was but too probable that they would be pursued to their hunting plains by the terrible epidemic, and that thus many would be exposed to die in the vast wilderness, far away from priest and altar, deprived of the consolations of religion. It was at last decided that they should set out for the Great Prairie at once, provided that a priest accompanied them, and consented to remain with them during their expedition. Father Fourmond willingly accepted to become their spiritual conductor in the great wilds, and their companion in all their sufferings. In his heart he offered his life to God on that occasion. A day's travelling brought them to the Fort of the Prairie. The first victim of the small-pox was struck down and expired, after a brief illness, on the threshold of the Fort. Two days passed before the fatal stroke fell upon any other member of the tribe. On the third day of the journey, a poor Indian and his little boy expired of the malady. Over their graves Father Fourmond

raised a large cross, at the foot of which he assembled the whole tribe, to pray to God for pardon for their sins, and to promise, with united voice, to love and serve Him for the future.

The dreadful malady continued to add to the number of its victims. Twenty—forty—sixty—a hundred lay smitten at the same time. At last two-thirds of the whole tribe were attacked. Father Fourmond had to act as nurse, physician, and undertaker, as well as priest. He was the only white man amongst that terrified multitude, and all were applying to him for counsel and succour. Alas ! in the midst of their terrible visitation, they were forced to keep up a wandering life. To remain stationary would lead to the death of all by hunger. They had to follow the receding herds of buffaloes or deer from one hunting ground to another. How describe the frightful increase of sufferings entailed by the frequent removals of the sick and dying ? The living and hale were scarcely numerous enough to bury the dead, and to help in carrying, from one place of encampment to another, the prostrate crowd of the plague-stricken. Sad and silent as a funeral procession, was the slow march through the prairies of the remnant of that great warrior tribe, pursued by an invisible foe which they could not shake off or escape from. Vain was craft or courage—vain was youth or strength. They continued to fall as quickly as if they were upon a battlefield. The living and strong of early morning were counted among the dying or dead at mid-day. The rude carts in which the sick were being conveyed, were crowded to excess. Christian sympathy, and the kindness of fathers and brothers existed on the part of the conductors of those melancholy teams ; and all that could be done for the plague-smitten was done, but impossibilities could not be overcome. On, the rude carts laden with the sick, had to roll over immense and roadless prairies. Sometimes the wheels sank with a sudden jerk into a deep rut or foxes' lair—sometimes they struck against the hidden stump of some fallen tree, and then the cart, with its helpless and moaning occupants, was precipitated into some dismal swamp.

The arrival at the place of encampment was accompanied with new discomforts. In lodges not more than nine feet in diameter, were grouped four or five, and sometimes as many as ten, victims of small-pox. They lay upon old buffalo hides, or upon the bare ground. A fire in the centre, whilst communicating some heat, filled the wretched tent with smoke and stench. Sixty lodges were full of small-pox patients. Into each one Father Fourmond had to creep on hands and knees to administer the Sacraments to the dying. Cautiously had he to grope in the dark, lest he should set his clothes on fire, or by friction cause new sufferings or abrasions to the plague-stricken. They lay before him scarcely recognisable as human beings, but his strong faith recognised, under this hideous covering of decaying and putrid flesh, immortal souls for which Jesus Christ had died, and for which the bright crown of glory was being prepared in Heaven. Amidst their groans of pain, rose also to his ears their sighs of true repentance, and their prayers for pardon. This consoled and gladdened him very much. "My Father," many of them said to him, "it is for my sins that God has punished me thus. I have many times offended the Great Spirit. He does not punish me as much as I deserve. In my blindness I did not know what sin was. I thank the Great Spirit and Holy Mary for giving me the knowledge I now have of the evil of sin." Father Fourmond assures us that he never heard from the lips of those poor patients one solitary murmur against the adorable hand that smote them. On the contrary, their general language, amidst their frightful sufferings and the throes of death, breathed the most perfect resignation to the Divine will.

The trials of that afflicted tribe have not yet reached their climax. The morning of the 9th of September was to usher in a new and terrible disaster. That day a parching and violent wind swept over the camp. In the far horizon volumes of smoke were seen to rise from the ground and to cloud the air, shutting out the view of the sun. The smoke coil began rapidly to extend and to advance, in circuit shape, towards the camp. To the eyes of all the terrible truth was visible that the prairie was on fire. The chief,

Louison Montagnais, seeing the danger, ran up his standard on the flag-staff over his tent. This was the signal for the assembling at once of his council. The council met hurriedly, and concluded unanimously that the Great Spirit alone could save them, so imminent was the danger.

Father Fourmond was at this time administering the Sacraments to some of the dying victims of the small-pox, and was not aware of the gravity of the peril by which the camp was being threatened. A messenger was sent to beg of him to assemble at once the whole tribe in prayer, to implore the Great Spirit that He, in His mercy, would rescue them from their peril. Father Fourmond's bell was rung to call the dispersed tribe together before his tent. The invitation was promptly obeyed, and all who were able to move came at once to the place appointed for the public prayer. Father Fourmond urged them to place their full confidence in God, to repent of their sins, and to join fervently in the prayers he was about to recite. The Rosary and other prayers were then fervently offered up by all. He then advised them to return, each to his own lodge, at once, and do what he could to save his family, and especially the sick.

It was then mid-day, the clouds of smoke were becoming denser at every moment, and the circuit of the flames, like a huge fiery serpent, was stealthily enfolding them in its deadly embrace. The air, which was thickly mixed with ashes, was becoming too hot to breathe. Flight was impossible, for the progress of the fire had cut off all avenues of retreat. One last attempt at saving their lives was adopted, though it seemed a hopeless one. A circle was formed of carts and waggons, within which all hastened to take refuge. Thither each family sought to convey the sick and the dying of their lodge. Lamentable were the cries of those whose relatives were dead, or had abandoned them, and who were left to their fate in their isolated lodges. Father Fourmond seemed to multiply himself in passing rapidly from lodge to lodge, to rescue the sick from the approaching flames. "*Save me ! Father, save me !*" was the cry which reached him repeatedly from poor abandoned invalids.

Many of the lodges were already in flames, the fire was gaining with frightful rapidity on the circle, within which were crowded the whole tribe, men, women, and children. The strong, the sick, and the dying were grouped there, together with such fragments of their goods as they were able to carry with them from their burning lodges. Will the slender barricade they have raised prove sufficient to stay the progress of the sea of fire which is approaching them from every side? Will it not itself be quickly turned into flames, and serve only to feed the fire which it was raised to check?

Father Fourmond was still afraid that some poor helpless sick person had not yet been removed out of the track of the fire. He attempted one further search, but was driven back by the hissing flames and stifling smoke. "Save yourself, Father," cried out a friendly voice, "you expose yourself to be burnt alive, fly quickly to the circle, the sick are all there." Father Fourmond returned to the circle; the heat had become intolerable; the day had been turned into a darkness deep as that of midnight by the dense smoke. To avoid suffocation, all put their faces to the ground. Everybody felt that his last hour had come. "I offered then to God," writes Father Fourmond, "the sacrifice of my life, and the lives of my poor Indians, and recommended my soul and theirs to Him. I could hear those lying near me saying, 'Pray for us, Father, pray for us.'"

The flames have reached the outward circle, their red glare is falling luridly on every object within it—one moment's further freedom for the advancing fire, and the inner circle, with all its occupants, their poor chattels and their domestic animals, will become one huge furnace. But a hand stronger than that of man, the same hand which holds the ocean's waves in check, held back the waves of that fiery torrent, at the moment when it was about completing its devastating work, by the destruction of hundreds of lives.

In the twinkling of an eye all danger ceases, the fire, of itself, unaccountably dies out—the darkness melts, and the bright face of the day reveals itself. One cry of thanksgiving, inaugurated by Father Fourmond, goes up from the

rescued multitude to God. Upon enquiry it was found there was only one who fell a victim to the flames, and he was the only one who had refused to join in the public prayers to implore God's protection.

The physical strength of Father Fourmond now began to fail him ; he was becoming unequal to the task of ministering any longer to the sick and dying. Hundreds of miles separated him from his *confrères*. He needed all his faith and trust in God to sustain him under the succession of appalling and heart-rending scenes which he had been witnessing, and through which he had been passing.

But a happy surprise was awaiting him. One day he was accompanying the funeral of a poor Indian, the latest victim of the terrible epidemic, when he was overtaken by a body of horsemen, who were escorting no less a personage than Monseigneur Grandin, his kind-hearted and zealous bishop, who had come personally to the help of the devoted missionary. His lordship having heard of his labours and sufferings and of the series of visitations which had overtaken the afflicted tribe with which he was journeying through the desert, resolved to hasten at once himself in person, to the good priest's relief, who describes in these words his meeting with the bishop :—

“ I cast myself at his feet to ask his lordship's blessing ; in giving it he embraced me warmly, whilst his tears fell abundantly on me. What a happy moment ! What a consolation was then granted to me in the sorrowful position in which I found myself, alone in the midst of that interminable and fire-wasted plain—surrounded daily by the dead and the dying. The recollection of this joyful meeting will never fade from my mind. His lordship minutely informed himself of the state of our poor sick Indians, and I on my part made enquiries relative to the incidents of the recent missionary expeditions of the good bishop, especially of his long and toilsome journey to Lake Caribou. Whilst thus conversing we arrived in view of our camp. Paul, my Indian sacristan, rang his great bell to assemble the tribe from their different lodges, to meet their chief pastor. The summons was quickly obeyed,

and all who had strength enough to quit their lodges, came to meet their beloved bishop, who appeared as an Angel of Consolation in their midst. His lordship was deeply moved at the sight of all those poor heads, bent to receive his blessing, and of all those careworn faces on which great sorrows and privations had left their deep impress."

The good bishop went from lodge to lodge, to administer confirmation to the dying, and to encourage and console all the afflicted ones who came in his path. One evening, at a late hour, he entered a lodge, where he found a father and a mother, and an only son, all lying smitten by small-pox, without anyone to attend to them. The devoted prelate volunteered to become for that night, himself, their nurse and attendant; at the same time he acted as their spiritual father, and laboured zealously to prepare each of these poor dying ones for a happy death.

His lordship's duties compelled him to quit this scene of devotedness earlier than he wished. He left all sorrowful at his departure, but consoled and edified by his words and example. The miseries of the afflicted tribe now reached their climax. Winter was setting in, and they had made no provision for its rigorous privations. Hunger and death by starvation in the wilderness were staring them in the face. All were in rags and in bare feet. Their stock of ammunition on which they had depended for procuring food by the chase, was exhausted. With the crowds of sick and dying encumbering them, they were unable to push forward through the immense solitude that separated them from the nearest point where they could get shelter and relief. Such was their condition when Divine Providence came mercifully to their help. One day a large and heavily-laden waggon was seen to approach their camp. It was conducted by two strangers, one of whom asked to be led to Father Fourmond's tent. He was the bearer of a letter from Mr. Christie, a superior officer and member of the Hudson Bay Company, who was stationed at the Fort of the Prairie, now Edmonton, capital of Alberta.

This excellent and charitable man informed Father Fourmond, that hearing of the privations and sufferings

which he and the tribe he was accompanying were enduring, he was forwarding a supply of the articles he thought they most needed. Great was the joy of Father Fourmond in distributing the contents of the well-laden waggon through the lodges of the tribe. Amongst the articles thus charitably sent were large packages of tea, and barrels of sugar, and delicacies for the sick, besides a plentiful supply of ammunition for the huntsmen. Alluding to this event Father Fourmond writes :—

“ Once again in my life have I been made to feel what a source of true happiness it is to make others happy, by coming at a timely moment to the relief of the suffering poor. Ah ! if the rich of this world knew of the true and solid joys which are to be found in dispensing the gifts of charity, they would be induced to contribute of their goods so abundantly to the poor, that the question of the pauperism of the day would soon be decided.”

Succoured by this providential help, the wandering tribe was able to continue its march, until at last, under Father Fourmond's guidance, it reached St. Albert.

CHAPTER XVII.

BRITISH COLUMBIA : THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

WHILST amidst the forests and prairies, and along the wild shores of the great lakes, lying eastward of the Rocky Mountains, the sons of de Mazenod were engaged in fulfilling the missionary ends of their vocation, on the western slopes of those great mountain ranges, several bands of Oblate missionaries were similarly occupied. Almost contemporaneously with the origin of the missions in the Red River and Mackenzie districts, other missionary fields extending westward from the Rocky Mountains to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, were confided to the zeal of the Oblates of Mary. Such was the recognized influence which the Oblate missionaries had acquired over the Indian tribes inhabiting those regions, that in May, 1864, the newly-appointed Governor of British Columbia appealed to the Fathers to co-operate with him in celebrating Queen Victoria's birthday at New Westminster, by assembling in that place the tribes under their spiritual jurisdiction on the 24th of that month. We will allow Father Gendré, to whom the Governor's application was made, to describe in his own words this remarkable assemblage of Indians :—

“ Having received the Governor's message, I saw that no time was to be lost in forwarding his invitation to the tribes that were encamped at a distance, in order to secure their presence on the appointed day in New Westminster. I despatched a chief to all the camps that lay within a radius of a hundred miles. In less than a week's time notice was given to all who could come. Our mission of St. Mary, Mission City, was fixed as the place of rendezvous. The man fitted to take the lead on that occasion, and to organize those scattered bands into one disciplined army, Father

Fouquet, was absent. He was then on the shores of Charlotte Island. But Providence came to our help. One night he arrived unexpectedly, and notwithstanding his fatigue, put himself at once at the head of the movement. The 22nd of May was for us a day of much anxiety. It was no easy matter to manœuvre some three thousand Indians, and to marshal them all in good order, to embark on the Fraser, and to have all their canoes keep well together on the river, until their arrival at New Westminster. Father Fouquet went before us to Westminster, leaving the conducting of the numerous expedition in my hands. On the morning of the 23rd I gave the signal for departure, and all launched their canoes on the waters of the Fraser. We paddled down the river until we arrived within a few miles of New Westminster. There we encamped for the night on the borders of a great forest. The following morning, at an early hour, everybody was on foot, and at the appointed signal all knelt in prayer. It was a touching sight to behold that adoring multitude. Religion, how sublime and beautiful thou art ! How thou ennoblest these poor children of the forest, now rallied around thy immortal standard ! The arrival of Father Grandidier at the head of five hundred Indians added to our numbers and to our joy. Father Fouquet also re-appeared upon the scene. Under his orders some seven hundred canoes are launched on the Fraser ; sixty banners are unfurled, on which is emblazoned the Cross—the sign of redemption. The oarsmen's song is intoned by our Indian pupils of St. Mary's, and taken up by three thousand five hundred voices. The hills and forests gave back melodiously the echoes of this multitude of manly voices. We disembarked at a short distance from the residence of the Governor. His Excellency came in great state, accompanied by some of his principal officers. Addresses were presented by three of the leading chiefs in their own language, which was interpreted to the Governor by Father Fouquet, who also was the interpreter of his Excellency's reply. A hospitable repast, furnished by his Excellency, happily terminated the festival."

The happy ascendancy over the tribes of British

Columbia acquired by the Oblate missionaries, of which the event just narrated affords an illustration, had been gained by twenty years of self-sacrificing labours in their midst.

The first Vicar Apostolic of British Columbia was Father D'Herbomez, who had been for many years Superior of the Oblate Missions in that country, and in the adjoining territories of the United States—the Oregon Missions as they were then called. He was consecrated at Victoria, Vancouver's Island, on October 9, 1864.

A fellow-labourer with Bishop D'Herbomez was Father Chirouse, the missionary of the tribes that inhabit the districts bordering on Puget Sound. The greater portion of his missionary domain was American territory.

In the letters of Father Chirouse he speaks of several striking manifestations of divine grace in the lives of many of the poor Indians. In one letter to Monseigneur de Mazenod he speaks of the conversion of a famous sorcerer, who, for several years, had been offering violent opposition to the introduction of Christianity to the pagan tribes.

“A pagan chief, a bitter persecutor of Christians, was killed in a drunken brawl on the same day that he had appointed for the assassination of a Catholic chief. His friends, in their superstitious fanaticism, attributed his death to sorcery, and fixed the blame upon Siacasout, the sorcerer or medicine-man, whom they resolved to kill. The aged Siacasout, to save his life, cast himself on the protection of the Fathers of the mission. ‘O Priests,’ he exclaimed, as he entered the mission-house, ‘you who forbid the shedding of blood, have pity on me! I am accused falsely, and they wish to put me to death. Speak in my behalf and my life will be saved. If you hear my petition, I will for the future listen to your instructions to please the Great Chief on high, and to save my soul.’ We spoke in his favour, and no one dared to lay hands upon him. He kept his word, and on the Feast of the Assumption we had the consolation of witnessing him renouncing, in presence of eight hundred savages, his profession as a sorcerer, and all the foolish and wicked superstitions of his

satanic art. In performing this solemn act, his attitude and words were so touching and pathetic, that many of those present were moved to tears of joy. Among other utterances of a similar contrite nature, he exclaimed, 'In crime have my hairs grown grey upon this earth, but they will return to their original hue in that bright land beyond the sky, where the aged bloom into youth again. Cost what it may, I am resolved to tear out from my heart the shackles of Satan. The God who pardons me will help me. I will devote to Him the remainder of my life, and He will receive my soul at my last breath.' Before he was converted he was called '*Siaca-sout*,' which signifies one powerful in sorcery, but after his conversion he wished to be called '*Touxkapt*,' that is, the true penitent. He renounced all his former wicked companions, burnt his books of sorcery, and the instruments of his unholy art. He became as humble as he formerly had been proud and haughty."

Father Chirouse in a later communication writes thus :—

"The spirit of charity has banished from the breasts of those Indians the homicidal spirit of hatred and revenge, of which they were formerly possessed. Our Indian Christians know how to forgive their enemies, and to pray for them. A few days since an unhappy Christian, who had relapsed into paganism, in which he persevered for seven years, was on the point of death. His name was Peter. He had contracted a debt with an excellent Catholic named Leo, which he was unable to pay. Leo, who was more anxious about the soul of Peter than he was about the recovery of the debt, hastened to the bedside of the dying man, to urge him to repentance. Taking him by the hand, he said, 'Peter, my friend, you are going to die ; take pity, I beseech you, upon your soul, and don't give it to the demon. If you fail in going to heaven, how terrible will your torments be for ever. Last springtide you attempted to assassinate me, but I will forgive you if you return to God. And lest you should be troubled by remembering what you owe me, I wish you to know that I bestow upon you the sum due to me by you. I implore of you not to die

without making your confession.' Peter's heart was touched by those words, and he begged of Leo to call a priest to him at once. The latter hastened to the mission, and said to me, with an air of holy triumph, 'My Father, come quickly, Peter is dying, and he wishes to make his confession. He is moved to tears, and repents bitterly of all his wicked deeds.' I set out immediately to visit the dying man. Having reached his bedside, I found he had forgotten all his prayers except the 'Hail Mary,' which he recited every day. He made his confession with great compunction. Having prepared him for death, I withdrew. When I came to visit him the next day I found him dead, and Leo kneeling at his side, reciting the Rosary for the repose of his soul."

Father Chirouse further makes mention of an Indian named Jacques, and of his nephew Felix. Both had become Christians, but Jacques had the misfortune to relapse into his former unbelief, and abandon himself to a criminal life. Felix, on the contrary, persevered in the profession and practice of the Catholic faith. Grace worked wonders in his young soul. Extraordinary virtues appeared in his life shortly after his baptism. He was continually praying for his uncle. The earthly pilgrimage of this holy Indian youth was soon to terminate. A rapid consumption brought him to his death-bed. Short though his career had been, he had already drawn to himself the holy affection of loving and devout hearts, that now grieved at their approaching loss. Father Chirouse was constantly at his bedside during his last hours. "My Father," said Felix to him after he had made his general confession, "I feel now that all my sins are forgiven. Oh, how happy I am! How good God is in giving me this assurance, that He has pardoned me! I shall not go down into the great fire, but I shall see Him who created me. I shall see my loving brother, my Saviour Jesus who died on the cross for me. I shall see my tender mother, the best of mothers, Mary, and my chiefs and protectors, the Angels. O Great Chief on high!" he exclaimed as he was receiving extreme unction, "pardon my eyes, pardon my ears, pardon all the members of my body for the sins committed by them. Mary, mother of poor

savages, intercede for me ! Angels of God, protect me from the fiery spirits that wish to devour me ! ” Felix died on the Feast of the Guardian Angels, the 2nd of October. Father Chirouse, who had assisted him at his death-bed, followed him to his grave. Jacques, the pervert, accompanied the funeral of his holy nephew.

Father Chirouse describes what followed :—

“ When pronouncing the last words of the prayers of the church over his grave, the tears which I had suppressed with difficulty, up to that moment, fell from my eyes, and God was good enough to cause this circumstance to become a source of edification to the crowd of Indians who were assembled around the grave. They were moved to tears themselves, in seeing a white man, a priest, weeping over the grave of a poor savage of their own tribe. Till then, Jacques the pervert, uncle of Felix, looked on stolidly—but this was too much for his indifference. He also wept and more copiously and louder than the others. Grace touched his heart at the same moment. A voice seemed to say within his breast, ‘ It is true then, that there is a heaven, and it is true that there is a hell, and that we have souls that will never die. Till now I doubted it, to-day I believe it, for see, how the priest loves good savages, and weeps at their death. A man that weeps thus cannot tell me a lie. There is a hell, and I have been going there, fool that I was. I will change my course. I will go the *Black Robe*, he will help me to escape the precipice and to save my soul.’ Jacques was faithful to his good resolution. That evening he came with tears to make his confession. His family who had fallen away, also returned to God with him. He is now one of the most fervent of our Christians, and delights in every good work.”

The prayers of Felix had been heard.

In a letter to Monseigneur de Mazenod Father Chirouse tells how he provided himself with a new cassock :—

“ My cassock was worn to tatters, and I was forced to seek some means of providing a new one. This was no easy

task in a country without cloth merchants or tailors. Having no cloth of any kind at hand, and nobody but myself to make the cassock, even if I had the proper material to use in its construction, I was forced to adopt an expedient of an unusual kind. I found I had a supernumerary blanket. This I resolved to convert into material for my own cassock. I succeeded, not in the most artistic manner, I confess, in cutting it into something of a cassock shape, but to add to my difficulties I had neither needle nor thread at my disposal. Fortunately I had a strong pin and some twine, and by their help I was able to connect the different portions of the cassock firmly enough together. Finding that it had not the proper clerical hue, I resolved to dye it, and I used some of the wild berries that were growing in the woods, for that purpose. But instead of dying it black they dyed it purple, and I found myself unexpectedly clad as a bishop. The next day I fell into the lake, and the dye being washed out, I found myself vested in a white cassock like the Pope."

In the correspondence of Father Fouquet, we find the following incident related, which we quote as a testimony to the extraordinary influence which Father Chirouse exercised over the minds and affections of the Indians of British Columbia. Acting in obedience to orders received from their Superiors, Fathers Chirouse and Fouquet set out to visit the tribes that inhabited the northern parts of British Columbia. After a sail of three days, they arrived, when night had fallen, close to the shore on the borders of which the tribe of the Penelakrest Indians were encamped. They then learnt from their guide that the chief of that tribe had been massacred, a week before, by some pagan Indians. As a consequence, the whole tribe was on the alert, prepared for a fresh attack from the same hostile quarter. Though Father Chirouse and his little party were certain of the near presence of a large body of Indians, yet all was silent as the grave; no stir was heard, and no sign was visible to indicate that anybody was nigh. All the while the little boat and its crew were being narrowly watched from the camp. The approaching party were taken for enemies, and preparations were made

to fire upon them as soon as they landed. All doubt as to the presence of an encampment was removed from the mind of Father Chirouse and his companions by the barking of dogs, which they heard coming from the spot where they supposed the camp to be. They were on the point of stepping ashore—one moment more, and a volley would have been discharged upon them. Instinctively Father Fouquet felt the danger, and cried "Chirouse, Chirouse," a name which he knew was loved by the Indians. Presently he heard a friendly voice answering in words of joyful recognition. Without further delay the poor Indians cast down their muskets and rushed into the water, in their eagerness to meet and welcome the Fathers. They were loud in their expressions of delight at not having fired upon them. "My finger was on the trigger, my Father," said a fine young Indian to Father Fouquet, "when I heard you cry out 'Chirouse, Chirouse.'"

It would be easy to fill a volume with heroic tales of the labours and sufferings, the marvellous success, and the frequent failure of the Oblate missionaries in British Columbia, even in the lifetime of their Founder. We have named some of the missionaries, and there were many others whose names ought to be a prized possession of their Order and of the Church. Father Pandosy, Father Lejacq, Father MacGuckin, Father Horris, Brother MacStay, Brother Allen, and others have had a great share in making and ruling a Christian people beyond the Rocky Mountains, and in providing for the spiritual needs of the paleface immigrants. Bishop D'Herbomez had for Coadjutor and successor Bishop Durieu, to whom succeeded Bishop Dontenwill, who in 1908 was elected Superior General of the whole Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TEXAS AS IT WAS.

FROM the rolling prairies and frozen lakes of the far North-Western regions of America, we now invite our readers to accompany us to its South-Western limits, where the Rio Grande flows under skies of cloudless blue, and between sloping banks carpeted with an endless variety of fairest tinted flowers, to empty itself into the Gulf of Mexico. Texas has received the title of "the Italy of the West," by reason of its resemblance in sky and landscape to the most beautiful and favoured of European lands. Surely one would think that, in such a climate and amid such scenery, missionary labour would become a light and pleasant duty, and that little scope would be left for a display of self-devotedness, and of patient long-suffering endurance, such as we have witnessed on the part of the Oblate Missionaries of the North. But the narrative of the Texan missions of the Oblates of Mary will make manifest the fact, that, notwithstanding all the rigours and privations of the frozen Mackenzie, trials and sufferings as painful have to be endured on the sunny shores of the Rio Grande. The trials there come more from men than things, from frozen hearts and minds of gloom, than from lakes of frost and skies of cloud and storm. The chief promoters of grief to missionaries are not the unbaptized and uncivilized hordes that wander through forest and prairie, but men who have sinned against the Holy Spirit by rejecting an ancestral faith, and who have lapsed into savagery by trampling under foot the blessings of Christian civilisation.

Let us first give a brief outline of the history of Texas. In 1687 La Salle, the famous French explorer, erected a fort on Matagorda Bay. In 1715 the country was settled by

the Spaniards under the name of the New Philippines, and several Catholic missions were established there ; but owing to the fierce assaults of the Comanche and the Apache Indians (among the most warlike in America), the progress of the country was retarded. Both Spain and France laid claim to Texas, which became a disputed territory, when the adjoining country, Louisiana, was ceded by France to the United States in 1803. For several years attempts were made by the Americans to wrest Texas from Spain, and many battles, resulting in great slaughter on both sides, were fought. When in 1821 Spain relinquished its hold upon Mexico, Texas became a dependency of the latter country, under the government of Moses Austin, an American. Settlers then began to pour in from the States, but many of them were such lawless characters that in 1830 the government made a law to prevent any more Americans from coming into Texas. In 1835 a provisional government was formed, Sam Houston (from whom the Texan town of Houston has its name) was chosen Commander-in-Chief, and the Mexicans were driven out of Texas. Houston's army was attacked by Santa Anna, President of the Mexican Republic, who led a force of 7,500 men, but who was defeated at San Jacinto. In 1837 Texas became an independent Republic, and remained such until 1845, when it was annexed to the United States. Shortly after the annexation, Texas was invaded by the Mexicans, and thus commenced the great war between the United States and Mexico, which was concluded only in 1848.

The unhappy frontier regions of Texas were the battle ground over which rolled the full tide of war, with all its concomitant evils. Brownsville rose from a soil still reeking with the horrors of the battle plain. It received the name of a victorious captain in the American army. Its population in 1848-9, when our story begins, was of a strange and motley character. Divers nations of Europe, the American States, and the cities, towns and hamlets of Mexico were represented at Brownsville, not as a rule by the wisest and best of their respective populations. Hither many honest people came, it is true ; but multitudes also flocked hither as fugitives from justice, or as adventurers. Public authority

could be scarcely said to exist at that time in Texas. Within a decade of years almost as many different forms of government had sprung up in succession, no time being given for any system of public law to acquire the prestige necessary for authority.

Early in December 1849, the first Oblate Missionaries, Fathers Telmon, Gaudet and Soulerin, arrived at Brownsville at the invitation of the Bishop of Galveston, to take charge of a district which extended in length from the Gulf of Mexico, over 200 miles running west by the northern bank of the Rio Grande. In width it stretched out in a northeasterly direction about 100 miles towards the interior of the country. We would here acknowledge at once that as regards Texas we have no wide-spread and extraordinary results of missionary effort to speak of, no fruits of zeal commensurate with the devotedness, the self-sacrifice, the piety, and learning of the Fathers engaged in that field of labour. The most crucial test of true apostolic zeal is that of devoted labour, not followed by any visible fruit. To this test have the labours of apostolic men in all ages of the church been subjected. The sowers do their appointed work, and are called home at evening-tide to receive their hire. The winter passes, the harvest ripens; Jerusalem begins to bud forth and blossom; the desert rejoices and flourishes like the lily; the fig tree puts forth its green figs, the vine in flower yields its sweet smell. Arise, put on thy strength, O Sion, put on the garments of thy glory, O City of the Holy One, loose the bonds from off thy neck. O Church of Jesus Christ come forth from the catacombs, the harvest is ripe upon the plains. The nations are coming to thee with their gifts, the kings of the earth are to be thy foster-fathers. Oh, blessed the hands that sowed the seed that has grown up into such glorious harvest-fruits.

The news of the arrival of the Missionary Fathers in Brownsville circulated through the town. A meeting took place of some of the principal inhabitants, to which the Fathers were invited, on the evening of the day of their arrival. The meeting, which was held in an empty wooden structure, was composed almost exclusively of non-Catholics, Jews, Mormons, professed Infidels, and Protestants of

different sects. An aged speaker, one of the leading inhabitants, rose up to bid welcome to the Fathers in the name of his fellow townsmen. In doing so, he made it clearly understood that the object those present had in view, in welcoming the Fathers to Brownsville, had nothing of a religious character. A discussion ensued as to the measures to be adopted for providing a residence and means of support for the Fathers. The first resolution adopted by the meeting did not give augury of much generosity on the part of the inhabitants of Brownsville. The lodging assigned them was the half-ruined shed in which they were then assembled. This consisted of one apartment, twenty-five feet by twelve, unfurnished, and without a fire-place. It had been a small cotton store ; the floor was saturated with filth, the place infested with rats, and with huge spiders whose webs covered the walls and ceiling. Such was the first community residence of the Oblates of Mary in Texas. It was further agreed at the meeting, that a monthly collection should be made in the town for their support.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception was approaching, and some place had to be provided where Mass could be said publicly on that great solemnity. With some difficulty an empty shop was secured, the counter of which became the first altar on which the holy sacrifice of the Mass was publicly celebrated by the Oblates in Brownsville. This humble temporary altar was fitted up with as much beauty of decoration as the small means at their disposal allowed. The attendance at the services was very sparse at the outset ; some slight improvement had begun to make itself manifest, when the rising hopes of the missionaries received a rude check by a "notice to quit" from the owner of their temporary chapel. For some weeks they and their little flock were left without a place of public worship in Brownsville.

At last a German Lutheran, whose wife was a Catholic, allowed them to have the use of a small empty shop. In the meantime a piece of ground was purchased, and a temporary wooden chapel was erected. The numbers attending the services began sensibly to increase, and

several signs of brighter promise became visible. On the other hand, the public subscriptions which had been promised for their support ceased, and a series of great difficulties presented themselves in succession ; worry and anxiety began painfully to tell on the health of the Fathers. Under these circumstances, after long hesitation, Monseigneur de Mazenod decided to withdraw his missionaries from Texas, to the great regret of Monseigneur Odin, the Bishop of Galveston. They withdrew, therefore, in 1850.

One year after the departure of the Fathers from Brownsville, the Bishop of Galveston visited Europe. A principal object of his journey was to place before Monseigneur de Mazenod the great spiritual privation of a large portion of his flock which followed the withdrawal of the Oblate Missionaries from his diocese. He pleaded his cause so well that the great missionary heart of Monseigneur de Mazenod was moved to reconsider this decision, and forthwith to send to Texas six Fathers and a lay Brother. After an interval of one year and six months' absence the Oblate Missionaries, including Father Gaudet, their devoted superior, resumed their work at Brownsville, where they arrived in the beginning of October 1852. Three years later they laid the foundation of a large permanent church, to replace the temporary wooden structure which they were then using. The new church was completed in 1859, and was solemnly opened by Monseigneur Odin, on the feast of Pentecost of that year. It was then acknowledged to be the finest public building in Texas. Attached to the church was erected a suitable community-house for the Fathers. Educational works of considerable importance were set on foot by the Fathers at Brownsville. A teaching community, the Sisters of the Incarnate Word, from Lyons, was established there. Boys' schools were also opened.

In 1859 the Oblate missionaries had the consolation of seeing crowds flocking to the services of their new and beautiful church in Brownsville. The attendance at the public Mass on Sunday used sometimes, in the early days of their temporary church, to sink down to five or six persons, and on an occasion there was only one person present ; now the church was crowded at several Masses.

This awakening of faith greatly gladdened the hearts of the missionaries. Their labours, however, were not confined to the population of Brownsville. Their vast district extending along the banks of the Rio Grande in one direction, and in the other stretching far away into the interior of Texas, was interspersed with ranchos which had to be visited at appointed intervals; a hundred missionary posts were dotted over their district. Besides these, there were many detached habitations scattered over the wide plains and prairies, or buried in the great forests, which they had also to visit. The labour imposed on the Fathers in visiting the inhabitants of the plains and forests of their district, was enormous. It is true they performed their journeys for the most part on horseback; nevertheless they had great fatigue to endure and sometimes great dangers to encounter, especially in fording swollen and rapid rivers.

Visiting the ranchos is a particularly trying work. When a missionary arrives, after a long day's ride under a broiling sun, great discomforts may await him. The huts composing the rancho are very miserable structures. A few poles are fixed in the ground, these are interlaced with branches of trees, and the exterior is coated with mud. Such is the habitation which is offered the missionary by some poor family who are glad to give him a corner in their hut, and share their unsavoury tortilla cake with him. He spreads his rug upon the floor of this humble abode, and using his saddle for a pillow he tries to sleep, but often fails in the attempt, notwithstanding his fatigue. The stench and filth of the place, the biting of mosquitos, and the attacks of other insects, prevent him frequently from enjoying the rest he so much needs. The inhabitants of these ranchos are of Mexican origin, and three-fourths Indian in blood. They are full of reverence for the priest, but owing to their isolation and the difficulty of giving them religious instruction, are often found to be very ignorant. During his stay in their midst the Father gives instructions and hears confessions, baptises, marries, corrects abuses, and adjudges quarrels. He leaves one rancho to pursue his apostolic labours in the next, and so on until he has completed his circuit of pastoral visits.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OBLATES IN MEXICO.

THOUGH the Rio Grande was the boundary line of the Oblate Missions in Texas, the expansion of the zeal of the Fathers at Brownsville was not to be confined to its northern banks. Mexico, that beautiful but harassed land, extended its fertile slopes to the edge of the yellow waters of the Rio Grande. Matamoras, the first frontier town on its north-eastern boundary, lay within two short miles of Brownsville. Matamoras is a river-port, and the commercial rival of Brownsville. The venerable parish priest of Matamoras was not slow in appreciating the zeal of the missionaries of Brownsville. He invited them to give missions at different times to his people. At the earnest request of the Bishop of Monterey, the Oblates established themselves at Victoria, the capital of the province of Tamaulipas. They also undertook the pastoral care of Matamoras and of the sanctuary of Notre Dame d'Agualas. Mexico was at that time in the throes of the revolutionary fever. The bulk of the population remained nevertheless firmly attached to the ancient faith; but helps to its practice were sadly wanting to them. Church property was plundered by successive governments; the good priests were either in prison or in exile, or if allowed to remain at their posts were harassed in the discharge of their ministry by petty interference, cruel exactions, and continued threats and annoyances. Vast districts were without priests at all, and other places were, if possible, in a worse condition. "*The ways of Sion were in mourning, and none came up to the solemn feasts.*"

Her virgins were in affliction ; she is oppressed with bitterness. The stones of the sanctuary were scattered at the tops of the streets. Her little ones asked for bread and there was none to break it to them."

What a field for devotedness opened up for the labours of the Oblate Missionaries ! Victoria and its surrounding neighbourhood awoke from a long trance of faith under the grace of the mission given in that town by the Oblates in 1860. After the mission, a small community of Fathers was established at Victoria. During one year they laboured in peace with great fruit for souls ; but troubles were in store for them. An insurrection broke out in their neighbourhood, and their expulsion was decreed by the provisional government. The inhabitants were divided into different factions. The most numerous and best disposed part of the population manifested their deep regret at the loss they were about to sustain by the departure of the Fathers, but they were powerless to do anything more than to protest. On the day fixed for the departure of the Fathers, an extraordinary assemblage filled the church to overflowing. All were clad in mourning garb. Before the congregation separated, after Mass had been said, a venerable matron rose up and addressed all present in the following terms : " We are about to be deprived of our priests who, because they are unwilling to prove false to their duties and betray their consciences, are to be persecuted. It may be expected that when we are deprived of the helps of religion, it will be easier to uproot from our breasts the Catholic Faith—the faith of our fathers, the faith in which we were born, and in which we wish to die. To-morrow the doors of this church will be closed, and it will then be impossible for us to come to offer our prayers at the foot of our altars. The house of God will be as a wilderness, empty of worshippers. From to-morrow our sick will be left to die without the sacraments ; our dead will be buried without the prayers of the church. But are we not Christians ? should we not insist upon our rights to practise our religion, and should we not boldly demand

for our priests the liberty to exercise freely their holy ministry in our behalf?" At the close of these noble words the whole audience burst into tears. A deputation was then formed to wait upon the new Prefect, to present an energetic protest against the expulsion of the Fathers. The Prefect was alarmed by these proceedings on the part of the Catholic population of Victoria. He gave an evasive answer to the demands of the people, but all the while he was only temporising in order to gain time to gather troops into the city, and be able thus to carry out, with a strong hand, the anti-religious programme of his party. Several leading Catholics were cast into prison, and the Fathers were ordered to quit Victoria without further delay. A great concourse assembled to bid them adieu, deep emotion was manifested by all present, and the Fathers were unable to suppress their own tears.

On 21 December, 1861, they set out on their sorrowful journey. On Christmas Eve they arrived at La Gavia, a large rancho, where they were received with welcome by the inhabitants. Here they halted for some days to celebrate the holy festivals of that season, but news reaching the government at Victoria of the Fathers' presence at Gavia, preremptory orders were despatched for their immediate departure. Their journey back to Brownsville was a very painful one, morally and physically. It occupied ten days. "We suffered much during that journey," writes Father Sivy; "the hot days were followed by very cold nights, and the rain fell in torrents at frequent intervals. Bivouacking on the open plain, we frequently had not a particle of wood, or any other means to make a fire during the night. With the damp ground for our bed, and a saddle for our pillow, it was not very easy to close our eyes in calm sleep."

Whilst the Fathers of Victoria were undergoing these trials a civil war was raging at Matamoras, whose inhabitants refused to acknowledge the newly-appointed Governor of Tamaulipas. The latter sent an army to besiege Matamoras. For three weeks the siege was carried on with great fury. A great part of the town was burnt down, and over a thousand of the population were killed. A

shell struck the Fathers' house ; much damage was done by it, but fortunately no life was lost. During these three terrible weeks the Fathers were continually on foot, administering the sacraments to the dying and attending to the sick and wounded.

After all these troubles comparative tranquillity reigned for five years on the Mexican borders. Religion began to flourish at Matamoras, and the Fathers stationed there felt themselves justified, by what they witnessed, in anticipating a large and permanent success for their labours in the future. Alas, these bright hopes were not to be realised, as the following letters from Father Clos to the Superior-General will show :—

“ VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

“ In my last letter I wrote to you in hopeful words. Since then, alas, revolution has followed upon revolution, and we have been living in the midst of continual tumults and anxieties ; on two several occasions our lives were exposed to gravest dangers. During the last siege of the city we were near losing our beloved Superior, Father Olivier. A shell, which caused great destruction, burst quite close to him, fortunately without injuring him. At present there is a momentary lull, and we are turning it to the best account while it lasts, knowing by sad experience how little we can count on the continuance of peace. But we are in the hands of God's holy providence, and this is our only consolation. Do not think that during these periods of trouble we fold our arms and remain idle spectators of the scenes that pass before us. No, for while the enemy assails the city from without, we carry on another sort of warfare within its walls. We battle by aid of the sword of the Word of God, and happily, through God's blessing, with most consoling success. The conversion of some poor sinner is the victory, which grace, from time to time, enables us to secure. We have baptised eleven adults within a short space of time, and one of these yielded up his purified soul two days after his baptism. Shortly before his death, seeing a Protestant friend of his at his bedside, his eyes filled with tears, and

gazing upon him fixedly, he said, with visible feelings of deep emotion, "Oh, how happy I feel; would that you would imitate my example and become a Catholic." He expired with the names of Jesus and Mary upon his lips, whilst invoking a blessing on the Father who had been the instrument, in God's hand, in securing for him the happiness of dying in the Catholic faith.

"A young American who held a commission in the Mexican army and became commander of a regiment, was the next to receive the grace of baptism at the hands of Father Olivier. His conversion took place under extraordinary circumstances. He had allowed himself to be bribed by the offer of a large sum of money on the part of certain American agents, and had arranged to assassinate the Mexican General in command at Matamoras, and to hand over that city to the Americans. A young Irish Catholic, who had refused to become a party to this wicked plot, became the means of the culprit being discovered. The misguided young officer was condemned to be shot, and was led forth to the place of execution. At that moment he flung himself at the feet of the Colonel in command to beg that a Catholic priest might be sent for to prepare him for death. The request was granted. On the arrival of Father Olivier, the young officer asked earnestly to be baptised and to be received into the Catholic Church. 'The devotedness,' he exclaimed, 'of the Sisters of Charity which I witnessed in the hospitals of Louisiana convinced me that the religion which inspired it must be true; therefore I wish to die a Catholic.' Father Olivier obtained a delay of half-an-hour for the execution, in order to have time to instruct and prepare him for his end, which he met with calm fortitude and in a truly penitential spirit.

"It fell to my share to be called upon to exercise my ministry on behalf of another unfortunate youth, a young Spaniard, who was condemned to death. He had resisted all the efforts of the military chaplain, who sought to induce him to prepare for death. The chaplain asked our Superior to appoint one of our Fathers to attend to him, and I was named for that sad duty. The condemned youth, in whose cell I undertook to spend the night before his execution,

received my advances very coldly, and resisted all my efforts to work a change in him. At last he consented to place himself under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, and to wear in her honour the Medal of the Immaculate Conception. In a short time a marked change came over him, and he flung himself at my feet to make his confession. He confessed three times that night in preparation for holy communion, which he received with fervour. He was led forth for execution early the next morning. His end was holy and resigned."

Father Parisot, nothing daunted by repeated failures in his attempts to secure the release of his *confrères*, finally succeeded in obtaining their freedom. One hour's further delay would have been fatal to them, for secret orders had been given to put them to death. Their immense popularity with the people of Matamoras was the cause which moved the head of the invading expedition to desire their being got rid of by the speediest means. When they were let out of prison, orders were given to have the river closely watched to prevent their effecting their escape to the Texan side of Rio Grande, but fortunately they were able to elude their pursuers, and to reach Brownsville in safety.

In later years the Oblates have resumed missionary work in Mexico, which for them forms one religious province with Texas. Mr. John F. O'Shea, in the Catholic Encyclopaedia (xiv., 549), says that "the very existence of religion among the Mexicans along the Rio Grande is largely due to their mighty labours."

CHAPTER XX.

“GREATER LOVE NO MAN HATH.”

THE Oblate Missioners are found working and suffering, succeeding and failing, on either side of the Rio Grande del Norte, in Mexico and in Texas. The Superior of the Missions there, Father Gaudet, wrote in 1858 to the Founder, whose heart was ever following his missionary sons on every step of their laborious career :—

“Send us the reports of our missions in other parts of the world, for we have great need to be comforted by the thought that elsewhere our brother Missionaries are cheered by present success, and by bright prospects of the further triumphs of their zeal. We have nothing here at the present hour but a succession of griefs and sufferings, whilst the future offers to our view a clouded horizon.”

During the building of their large and handsome church in Brownsville, happier prospects seemed to dawn upon the labours of the Oblate Missionaries in that place. But a new and severe trial was close at hand. The subtle poison of a terrible plague was hovering in an atmosphere that seemed to breathe only life and health. One fatal morning in 1858 Brownsville awoke to the fact that the plague was upon it. A mute terror seized upon the inhabitants, for they knew they had to cope with an enemy against whose assaults human prowess and ingenuity were of little avail. An awakening of faith in the breasts of many in whose souls that virtue had for long years lain dormant, was one of the spiritual good things that came out of the abyss of temporal misery created by the scourge of the plague. The services of the Fathers were sought for on every side by

the plague-smitten and the dying. Day and night they were on foot going from one stricken victim to another, bearing the supreme comforts of religion to the dying. They had no time for food or rest. Are they to enjoy immunity from the common scourge? No, it is to fall heavily on them. A holy young novice Brother, who gave great hopes of future missionary success, was the first of the community who fell a victim to the plague. He died in the fragrance of his early fervour. He was soon followed to the grave by a young priest, Father de Lustrac, a member of the Oblate community of Matamoras, who had volunteered to come to the aid of his brother missionaries at Brownsville. On the day of his arrival at the latter place, a messenger came from a rancho which lay at a distance of thirty miles from Brownsville, to ask for a Father to visit a poor man who was then dying of the plague. Father de Lustrac at once offered himself for this work of charity. He set forth, never to return. He had scarcely administered the last sacraments to the dying man, when he was seized himself by the disease. A messenger arrived at Brownsville to inform the community that he lay dying in the rancho. Father Parisot hastened to his bedside to prepare him for his happy end. He died the death of God's saints, at the early age of 36.

The zealous and devoted Superior, Father Gaudet, was the next to be laid prostrate on the fever pallet, and great fears were entertained for his life, but happily God heard the prayers that were said in his behalf. Fathers Clos, Parisot, Kéralum, and other members of the Brownsville community had each to pay to the terrible plague-scurge the tribute of a dangerous illness. By degrees the number of cases of yellow fever lessened in daily average, and at last it seemed to have disappeared altogether. The town began to resume its former appearance, and the Fathers returned to their ordinary missionary work. But the return of the dread malady, in 1862, plunged the unhappy residents of Brownsville back into their former state of consternation, and renewed the sad scenes of death and bereavement from which they had but lately come forth. The first member of the Oblate community who fell a victim to the plague on its reappearance, was the Lay Brother Copeland. He was a

man of rare and simple piety, and his loss was very keenly felt, though he had been but a short time in the community.

Father Sivy, who had laboured much, especially in Mexico, was the next to pay the forfeiture of his life to his zeal in ministering to the plague-stricken in the homes and hospitals of Brownsville, and in the ranchos of the surrounding country. At the same hour that this zealous young missionary was dying, there lay at the point of death, in an adjoining apartment, another young and devoted Oblate priest, Father Shumacher. They both died on the same day, and of the same terrible disease. Father Schumacher was 39 years of age; Father Sivy only 28. Hearing of lives and deaths like theirs we remember how truly it has been written, "Hid are the Saints of God."

Father Gaudet, in communicating the news of these deaths says :—

"I shall not attempt to describe to you the weight of sorrow that oppresses me. My pen refuses to put on paper the feelings of profound sadness that fill my soul. May God's holy will be done; He is the supreme Master of our lives. I make no complaint, but I do not know what to think or say in presence of so many and of such terrible trials. I await some words of consolation from you."

His affection for his departed brother missionaries spoke in these words of the Superior of the Oblates of Brownsville. But he grieved especially because of the spiritual loss to the souls of many which was involved in the death of such devoted labourers in the vineyard.

CHAPTER XXI.

TEXAS DURING THE CIVIL WAR.

THE period of comparative tranquillity and of successful missionary labour, which followed the disappearance of the plague from Brownsville, did not continue for many months. The unhappy city was soon the theatre on which another more terrible scourge displayed itself in huge proportions. War is at hand, Texas has flung its lot in with the Confederate States, and Brownsville is threatened by Federal troops. The Confederate soldiery do not feel themselves equal to the task of defending it against the advancing Federal hosts, but they are unwilling that it should fall into the hands of the enemy, and they resolve to set it on fire. Inflammable substances are secretly distributed in the town, and casks of gunpowder are concealed near the most important buildings, one of them in a vault near the church and residence of the Oblate Fathers. The last Confederate soldier has scarcely left the precincts of the town, when fires break out in all directions, accompanied by terrific explosions. Huge rolling flames advance towards the quarter where lie the church and house of the Fathers. Prayer is the only resource of the good priests at that supreme moment. The wind is carrying the flames steadily and swiftly in the direction of their buildings. A few moments more of unchecked play will bring the advancing torrent of fire upon the buildings of the mission; and upon the vault in which the cask of powder lies concealed. Suddenly the wind changes by God's special providence, no doubt, and the church and house of the Fathers, and their lives were saved. What scenes of desolation met their view as they went forth into the streets of that half-burned and abandoned city! The population had all fled in terror, carrying with them such of their chattels as were portable. They had taken refuge on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande. The Fathers were left without a congregation for their church, and the fruits of years of missionary labours all perished in an hour.

CHAPTER XXII.

THROUGH DEATH TO LIFE.

DURING all the troubles of the Oblate Missionaries at Matamoras and Brownsville, and elsewhere, there was one work of devotedness which never remained long suspended. It was that of visiting the widely scattered members of their flock in the dispersed ranchos of their vast district.

There was one of the Fathers of Brownsville who, by reason of his special zeal for these poor people, might well be called the Apostle of the Ranchos. He closed an apostle's life by a martyr's death, in November 1872.

Father Peter Yves Kéralum was greatly venerated wherever he was known. The Mexicans called him *el Santo Padre Pedrito*. This popular title he acquired by twenty years of humble devoted missionary labours. It often happened that the people of some of the ranchos in his district would invite him to prolong his stay amongst them, but on his replying to them that his Superior had fixed a certain day for his return to his community, they would not press him any further, knowing how inflexible he was in obeying. He was a true observer of holy poverty. He was bursar of the house, yet whilst he provided for the wants of others he often forgot his own. He was never heard to complain of the long missionary journeys he had to undertake, which were often accompanied with the severest fatigues and privations. He often had to endure hunger and thirst for days in visiting the scattered population of his district. How often was he overtaken by nightfall in the midst of the lonely forest or wild plain! On one occasion he remained for three days lost in a wood, without food or drink. On the morning of the fourth day he found his way to the mission rancho of Lomita. He was wasted away by hunger and fatigue, his body was covered with thorns, and his cassock hanging in shreds about him so that he was scarcely recognisable. When returning to community life after such long and fatiguing journeys and missionary labours, he sought no relaxation

from the observance of rule, and was in his place next morning at the usual hour of meditation.

One morning Father Kéralum knelt to receive his Superior's blessing before setting forth upon one of his missionary rounds of visitation. An appointed time was fixed for his return to Brownsville. Contrary to his custom on such occasions, he did not appear in his community on the appointed day. Day followed day, and he did not come, nor any message from him. Enquiries were set on foot, and his course from rancho to rancho was traced for the three days that followed his departure from Brownsville, but after that date no further tidings of him could be obtained. Weeks and months of fruitless expectation passed by, and the conclusion finally come to was that he was dead. This indeed was the sad truth. Nothing however for years came to light to give a clue to the cause, or the manner, or the place of his death. This clue was found long afterwards. In one of the ranchos which Father Kéralum proposed to visit, dwelt a man of evil repute, who had accumulated a considerable amount of property mainly by cattle stealing. He had a numerous following of desperate men. His name was a terror to the poor inhabitants of the ranchos of the wide district in which he and his followers carried on their daring robberies. About the time of the visit of Father Kéralum to his rancho, he had been out on one of his usual predatory excursions, and had brought back four hundred head of stolen cattle. On his arrival he gave orders to a domestic to take measures for the concealment of the cattle. This man happened to be a good Christian, and was unwilling in any way to take part in the deed of plunder. He ventured further to advise his employer concerning the life he was pursuing. From that moment his doom was fixed. The next day the master gave him orders to repair, on some pretended errand, to a retired spot in a neighbouring forest. On his arrival at the appointed place, he found his master and a small band of his followers assembled. To his horror he perceived a cord with a noose at the end, suspended from the branch of a tree. Quickly he was seized and the noose was adjusted to his neck. At that moment

somebody was seen to emerge from a pathway in the forest. It was Father Kéralum, who was on one of his missionary journeys. The unexpected presence of the good priest disconcerted, for a moment, the murderers in the execution of their wicked deed, and awakened a passing hope in the breast of their intended victim. The latter cried aloud to Father Kéralum to come to rescue him, or at least to hear his confession and prepare him for death. For a moment the venerable and devoted priest stood appalled at the sight that met his gaze, as he lifted his eyes from his office book. At that moment one of the murderers, a fierce-looking man, stepped forward holding a loaded revolver in his hand, which he presented at Father Kéralum, threatening him with death if he advanced. Mingled with the sounds of these threats were the cries of the poor man that was about being murdered, who was calling his spiritual Father to his aid. Heedless of danger, the good shepherd rushed forward to embrace and to save if possible, a poor sheep of his fold from the fangs of those wolves in human form. A ball from the pistol of the assassin struck Father Kéralum on the breast, and he fell forward wounded mortally at the feet of him whom he sought to save from death. Had the good priest time to pronounce the form of absolution in behalf of his companion in death? or were they able to interchange hopes of meeting that day in paradise? That they did meet that very day in heaven as two martyr spirits may well be believed—the one a martyr of charity and zeal, and the other a martyr of justice and truth.

In one of the cities of the Southern States of America, some years later, a great criminal, who had been convicted of several robberies and murders, was being led forth from his prison cell to suffer the supreme penalty of the law. He made a sign that he wished to address those around him. Permission being granted, he declared that he wished to reveal a hidden crime with which he had never been charged in public, but which had for years been torturing his soul with remorse. He then accused himself of being the murderer of Father Kéralum, and circumstantially told the story of his own terrible crime, and of the heroic fortitude and charity of his victim.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GRACE DIEU CHAPLAINCY.

IN all the works of the Oblates in the foreign mission field, the Superior General himself, the Bishop of Marseilles, took what may well be called a personal part. His zeal for souls, and his affectionate interest in all his missionary sons, made him follow them step by step in their wanderings, whether amid snow and ice, or over burning sands. It was he who sent them on their mission ; it was he who welcomed them if ever they could visit Europe. He could hardly keep back his tears when noticing in the Bishop's house at Marseilles, how such or such a returned missionary never seemed to have bread enough, so long had he been without the taste of it. It was Bishop de Mazenod himself who had ordained nearly all the first Oblate missionaries, and when any of them were needed for the posts of pioneer Bishops, he claimed the privilege of being their consecrator.

But of course he was very busy also with missionary work at home, and especially with his own diocese. This is not the place to attempt even a " sketch " of his fruitful episcopate of over a quarter of a century. We would recommend to all our readers the study of the volume *Bishop de Mazenod* (London : Washbourne) by Father Baffie, O.M.I., Assistant of the present Superior General. Although chiefly concerned with the Bishop's " inner life and virtues," it tells something also of his labours as missionary and ruler of a diocese, and of his battles for the faith.

Father Cooke in the ninth chapter of his second volume tells us of the foundations made in Corsica by Mgr. de Mazenod, at the request of Mgr. Casanelli d'Istria, Bishop of Ajaccio, himself youthful, energetic, and a former Roman

student. The missions given in Corsica in those early days, the eighteen-thirties and forties, by the saintly Father Albini, and Father Guibert (afterwards Cardinal), and other Oblates, might well be compared with foreign missionary work, on account of the neglected condition of the island and the blood-feuds among the people. The Bishop of Ajaccio called on the Oblate Fathers also to help him in providing and training priests for the diocese, and they remained in charge of the diocesan seminary until the expulsion of the religious orders from France, early in the twentieth century.

Even before being Bishop of Marseilles, Mgr. de Mazenod, whether as Auxiliary Bishop, or as Vicar General and Provost of the Chapter under his uncle, or as Superior of a body of missionaries, became widely known. In 1836 an Eastern sheik or prince wrote to him, in Arabic, to beg him to use his "deservedly great influence with the Holy See" in favour of a cause which concerned the petitioner very much. In 1846, when Pius IX. became Pope, Count de Montalembert, in spite of some differences with Mgr. de Mazenod over the *Avenir*, wrote to thank him for his pastoral, whose "noble language delighted and encouraged him," and made him count specially upon the Bishop as determined to save France from the abyss, in the battle about to begin anew with the enemies of freedom in the school.

In those very times, whilst so busy at home, the Bishop of Marseilles, as we have already seen in part, was taking possession, in the persons of his spiritual children, and on behalf of the Catholic Church, of land in which the light of the Catholic Faith had never shone, or from which it had been withdrawn through misfortunes of the time. The year after the departure of some Oblates to Canada and its Indian Missions, all England, and not England alone, was stirred by the reception into the Church of John Henry Newman. The period had begun which that great convert himself was to call "The Second Spring." There was a great revival of faith and piety in the land once "The Dowry of Mary." "The Conversion of England" was on the lips of all Catholics, and in their prayers. New religious

communities were being welcomed into England, to take part, if so it might be, in helping the return of the strayed children to the "Mighty Mother." Passionists had come, and Redemptorists, and members of the Institute of Charity. Bishop de Mazenod was zealous to do some share of work in the new sphere of labour. Besides writing pastorals, and ordering public prayers, for the "Conversion of England," he sent from his own side one of his most trusted sons to introduce his missionary Congregation into the United Kingdom, so as to do some good work there also, and eventually to attract religious men who would carry their own English speech into the foreign missionary countries where it was already in possession. Father Casimir Aubert, who had been the Founder's own assistant and secretary, was sent by him into England and Ireland. He was a holy man, of remarkable talent, and great sweetness of disposition. He had joined the Oblates in 1826, on the occasion of a Mission preached, by Father Guibert and others, in the town where he was an ecclesiastical student, his native town of Digne, in a valley of the Lower Alps. His novice master was Father Guibert. In the eighteenthies Father Aubert was Superior of the Oblate house, Le Calvaire, in Marseilles. When he came to England and Ireland, he made many friends among Bishops and priests, and, of the laymen who were interested in him and his religious congregation, we must name Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle and Daniel O'Connell. The enthusiastic convert, Mr. de Lisle, was the founder of the Cistercian Abbey of Mount St. Bernard, in Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire. He also built churches at Grace Dieu, Whitwick and Shepshed. In the course of time, Oblates of Mary Immaculate served the two Missions of Grace Dieu Manor and Whitwick, succeeding at Grace Dieu the learned and holy missionary, Father Gentili, of the Institute of Charity. The priests in those Missions were of course the chaplains of Mr. de Lisle, the Lord of the Manor.

When Father Cooke (whose own words now, thirty years after his death, must be varied in many places) was ordained priest, in June 1846, by Bishop de Mazenod, he was sent to join the little community of Oblates at Grace Dieu. He

found them continuing there the custom of open-air preaching, which had been begun by Father Gentili. Father Cooke, and another young and zealous priest, who soon joined him, Father Noble, were for a considerable time engaged in this special work of preaching to the Protestant people in the open air. The subject was always on some great Christian truth, such as salvation, conversion, the passion of Jesus Christ, &c.; controversy was avoided. At the close of the sermon expressions of satisfaction and good-will fell from the lips of several in the crowd, accompanied by invitations to the Father to renew his visit at some early date. Many also, on those occasions, used to express their astonishment that such scriptural doctrines could be preached by a Catholic Priest, as they had always been led to believe that Catholic Priests did not hold with scripture truths. This first glimpse of the beauty of Catholic teaching having dawned upon their minds, a thirst for further knowledge was produced on the part of several, which caused them to pursue their search after the truth, until they finally entered the one fold of the True Shepherd.

CHAPTER XXIV.

YORKSHIRE AND LIVERPOOL.

ANOTHER place in which the Oblates were at work, in their beginnings in these countries, was Everingham Park, Yorkshire, the residence of William Constable Maxwell, Lord Herries, who built and endowed the church at Everingham.

In 1848, at the request of Bishop Briggs, the Oblates at Everingham undertook to do some missionary work at Howden, twelve miles distant. Let Father Cooke tell some of his experiences in his own words. Howden was possessed of an ancient and very beautiful collegiate church, one portion of which was then in ruins ; and the rest, including the towers, was in a state of good preservation, and was used for the Anglican service. Mass had not been said in that town since the Reformation, until the Everingham community undertook the service. Not more than a dozen Catholics resided there at that time (1848). It was arranged that the first sermon was to be given by Father Cooke in a large public room, the Howden Town Hall, which was hired for the purpose. Arriving from Everingham on the Sunday evening appointed for the sermon, he learnt that the parties who had agreed to allow the Town Hall to be used had withdrawn from their engagement. The news that a Catholic Priest was to preach had drawn into the town, from the villages and hamlets of the surrounding districts, a large concourse of persons, whose chief motive, no doubt, was curiosity to see a Priest, and to hear the strange things which they supposed he must have to say. A general discontent was manifested at the refusal of the lessees of the Town Hall to keep to their agreement.

A meeting was held, composed exclusively of various sections of Protestants, and a deputation was formed to wait on the priest, with the request that he would address

the crowd from the market cross. The ancient Catholic cross had disappeared, but the steps remained. This was a real demonstration of good-will on the part of so many to whom the priest was a stranger, and none of whom were Catholics. He felt that he ought not to refuse compliance with their request, and he agreed to preach from the steps of the market cross. The large open space in front of the spot from which he spoke on that occasion; was crowded by an attentive and respectful auditory, which was composed of Anglicans, Methodists, Independents, and others. The attendance in the different churches and chapels of Howden must have been very sparse that evening, as a large portion of their usual congregations were attracted by the novelty of hearing a Catholic Priest deliver his first sermon in Howden. God was pleased, on that occasion, to sow the seeds of converting grace in the souls of several whom the preacher had the happiness afterwards of receiving into the true church. A temporary chapel was opened soon afterwards which was regularly served from Everingham. Richard Vivers, who was a methodist class leader, had been employed in fitting up the chapel. He was present at the service one Sunday evening when a sermon on the Real Presence was announced for the following Sunday. When he heard the subject of the sermon, he said to himself, as he afterwards acknowledged, "Ah, that is my stumbling block ; I shall never believe in that doctrine." On arriving from Everingham in the evening of the following Sunday, Father Cooke was surprised to find Richard Vivers praying devoutly in the temporary chapel, though the hour for the assembling of the congregation had not yet come. He learnt afterwards, from the good man himself, why he was praying thus before the service began. "I desired earnestly," he said, "to know the truth concerning the Real Presence ; I therefore resolved to come to the chapel some time before the service commenced, to pray to God for light to know whether the doctrine you were to preach on that subject was the truth or not." Surely, if others had desired to know the truth, and prayed earnestly for light as he had done, they also would have been admitted to a share in his loving Eucharistic faith. Having

heard the sermon, and noted in his mind the different scriptural proofs of the Real Presence, he retired full of thoughtful emotion. On reaching his home, he took his bible from its shelf. Calling to his side his wife, a very intelligent woman, who was one of his own pious cast of mind, they both knelt in prayer, and besought God to guide them in their inquiry. They then examined together the passages of scripture which had been referred to. They were thus occupied for the greater part of that night ; conviction of the truth of the Real Presence suddenly flashed on the mind of husband and wife at the same moment, and they knelt down again and prayed to God to pardon them for their sin of unbelief. "Are we not," they said to one another "as bad as the Jews, who refused to believe Christ's words declaring that Real Presence?" The following morning Richard Vivers came, declared his wish to become a Catholic, and related the circumstances just mentioned. "It is true," he said, "I have as yet made enquiry only upon one point of Catholic doctrine—the Real Presence—but I am ready to believe in all the others, for if that doctrine which is so difficult can be so well proved—proof, I am sure, can be supplied for all the others." Father Cooke had the happiness of admitting him, his wife and children, into the church.

For a suitable new church at Howden the Oblate Fathers at Everingham soon began to raise subscriptions. A well-situated piece of ground was secured by them as a site, and in the summer of 1850 the first stone of the new building was laid by Bishop Briggs. A beautiful small Gothic church was erected, under the title of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. So it was the opening ceremony took place on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1851. The Right Rev. Dr. Ullathorne preached the opening sermon.

Besides the work of establishing the Howden mission, the Oblate community at Everingham were engaged in restoring the mission of Pocklington, a town five miles from the latter place, where several conversions were also accomplished.

But larger fields of labour were about to be opened to the zeal and devotedness of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate

in England. Father Aubert had returned to France, after taking the first steps for the introduction of his society into this country. At the close of the year 1849, he was again in England, and engaged in negotiations with the Right Rev. Dr. Brown, Bishop of Liverpool, relative to the founding of an establishment of Oblates in that town. These negotiations were happily concluded on 15 January, 1850, and on the 18th of the same month formal possession was taken by the Oblates of Mary of their new mission of Holy Cross, Liverpool. No spot could be better selected as a field for the special vocation of the Oblates of Mary, the evangelizing of the poor, than that occupied by the mission of Holy Cross, Liverpool. There, after the famine years in Ireland, were crowded ten thousand of the poorest Catholics. Holy Cross mission is situated in the very heart of Liverpool, and at a short distance from the docks and landing stage. How describe the church in which the Oblates of Liverpool had first to exercise their ministry? The area of this extraordinary building consisted of a cow-house and coal store; the first floor was occupied as a rag and bone store; the second floor was used as a poor school; and the third floor served as a temporary church.

Father Noble was Father Aubert's first companion in founding the mission of Holy Cross. The work of providing suitable schools for the children who were wandering, untaught, in hundreds through the courts and alleys of the district, was undertaken by him. He pursued the good work with ceaseless perseverance, until he succeeded in raising one of the largest blocks of Catholic school buildings in England. Years had to elapse, after the erection of the schools, before the work of building a church was undertaken. It was during the Superiorship of Father Jolivet, afterwards Vicar Apostolic of Natal, that the good work of building the fine church of Holy Cross was undertaken and completed as far as the chancel arch. Simultaneously with the building of the church, a community house for the Fathers adjoining it was also constructed. Both buildings were erected from the designs of Edward Welby Pugin. They form a noble ecclesiastical group of structures, and occupy one of the most central sites in Liverpool. Few of

those unacquainted with the circumstances of the case could imagine what an amount of mental anxiety and bodily fatigue it cost the devoted and energetic missionaries, to raise one of the largest and handsomest churches in Liverpool, in the midst of such a poverty-stricken multitude as that which composed the congregation of Holy Cross. In later years the building of the chancel, which took place under Father Matthew Gaughren (now Bishop in Kimberley, South Africa), and which was due largely to his active initiation, gave completeness to the church.

In the fifth and several succeeding decades of the nineteenth century, the streets all around the Church of Holy Cross in Liverpool were a truly "congested district." Father Bradshaw used to say that whenever the Fathers went their rounds in the parish, they saw heads popping out, and popping up, even from underground, "like rabbits in a burrow." The very cellars were crowded—with victims of the artificial famine in Ireland. No wonder that there was much sickness. In 1862 Father Dutertre, in 1863 Father Robert Power, was carried off by fever from a fever-stricken flock which idolised them.

In the end of 1882 an epidemic of typhus swept over the district, and carried hundreds of the poor people to an early grave. In February 1883, Father Roche, then Superior at Holy Cross, caught the disease in one of his many sick calls. For weeks his life was in danger. Father Bryan O'Dwyer, fearless of all risks, was one of those who nursed him. His nurses, and the devotedness and skill of Dr. Bligh, with God's blessing, brought him safe through his illness, and he is still amongst us in 1913. The popular rejoicing over Father Roche's recovery was suddenly stopped by the news that one of his assistants, Father Madden, had brought home the disease. In a few days, Father Madden was dead and buried (April 1883). No event in the long history of Holy Cross touched the hearts of the people so deeply as the death of this young priest. The older members of the Holy Cross congregation still speak of the extraordinary procession which, to the wonder of all Liverpool, accompanied his remains to the cemetery at Ford.

The history of the Holy Cross parish is one of really noble achievement, of the faith preserved in spite of enormous difficulties, of a new generation of Catholics, whose dearest hope it is to hand down to others, unsullied and in all its fulness, the Catholic tradition of those afflicted but faithful Irish people, who had fled from a land which ought to have been their own. As elsewhere, so in Liverpool, the Catholic schools have been the nurseries of the faith. Only by continuous effort, and by great sacrifices, have they been kept alive. About the middle of the nineties, the schools of Holy Cross parish, which had served their purpose well for over forty years, were condemned by the education authorities. They had to be reconstructed or closed. To Father MacSherry, then Superior, fell the heavy task of practically rebuilding the schools. The work was satisfactorily done inside of twelve months, at a cost of £3,500, collected from door to door, and contributed in good measure by the generous poor people of the Fathers' own parish.

Whilst still busily engaged in the Holy Cross quarter of Liverpool, the Oblate Fathers were in 1862 invited by the Bishop of Shrewsbury to take charge of the Rock Ferry district, on the opposite side of the Mersey. It was then almost in the country, as it is in part even still, although now a portion of the borough of Birkenhead. The first residence of the Fathers there served as a country house for those who were exhausted by the church work and sick calls in the crowded neighbourhood of Great Crosshall Street. Besides Father Jolivet, there worked at Rock Ferry, among many others, the venerable Father Egan, who remembered the days when children in country parts of England would call after him, "Oh, for a rope to hang the Pope!" At various times, under Fathers Bradshaw, William Ryan, King, Anthony Gaughran, and Leahy, the Rock Ferry Mission has been provided with fine buildings for church, convent, presbytery, schools, and parish hall. A second convent has in later times been established in the parish by the Irish Sisters of Charity—Saint Margaret's Home. The Birkenhead Workhouse (and often that of Wirral at Clatterbridge), the Reformatory ship

Clarence, the Bebington Cemetery, and the district of New Ferry were for many long years served by the Oblate Fathers of Rock Ferry.

The large convent near St. Anne's Church, Rock Ferry, is the noviciate of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (Congregation of the Holy Family), who are found in nearly every place where there is an Oblate Mission, as well as in many another post, and are the most devoted of workers. The spacious grounds attached to their Highfield Road Convent, in what is now a town, remind one of the days when all that neighbourhood was indeed "Green Lawn," and the country, and when, for an afternoon walk, one passed through the brickfields out of which the town has grown.

P.S.—Father Roche, named above, died after a long illness, in Leeds, on December 29, 1913. R.I.P.

CHAPTER XXV.

LEEDS.

ONE year after the foundation of the Oblate mission in Liverpool, the hand of Divine Providence prepared the way for a foundation in the large manufacturing town of Leeds. In 1845 the Anglican Church of St. Saviour, of which Dr. Pusey was the patron, was opened in Leeds. Its site lay in the centre of a poor and thickly populated part of the City, quite near the spot where the Church of the Oblate Fathers now stands. The eyes of the advanced High Church party throughout England were then directed towards St. Saviour's, in great expectation of results which, it was fondly hoped, would show forth the living Catholicity of the Anglican Church. It was the dream of many Anglicans that all that their Church required was a free scope of action, especially among the working classes in manufacturing centres, in order to prove the divinity of her mission. Dr. Pusey was full of this idea, and was prepared to devote a large sum of money to its development. At the request of the celebrated Rev. Dr. Hook, Leeds was chosen as the scene of the experiment. Dr. Pusey for a time was master of the situation. A noble church was raised through his instrumentality, in the midst of a dense mass of working people. The clergymen who were to minister in it were chosen by himself. They were to live in community, observing celibacy, and following a rule which imposed regular hours of prayer and practices of mortification. The opening of St. Saviour's was celebrated with an octave of sermons, which were preached by Dr. Pusey, Mr. Keble, and other Tractarian notabilities. A gloom, however, was cast upon the proceedings by the absence of one who, it had been hoped, would have been present at the opening, Dr. Newman. He was being

received into the Catholic Church that very day. Dissensions soon arose in connection with St. Saviour's. Dr. Hook, Vicar of Leeds, withdrew his patronage. Bishop Longfield, of Ripon, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was ready, as the champion of the Protestantism of the Church of England, to check the outgrowth of the so-called "Catholic developments." He objected to the inscription over the west door, "Ye who enter this holy place pray for the sinner who built it," on the ground that the founder must die, and so prayers might be said for him by some one after his death. He consented to allow the inscription to stand, but only on the condition that should the founder die while he was Bishop of Ripon, he should be informed of it. He had inscriptions of a similar character removed from two chalices before permitting them to be used.

These circumstances will show the antagonism of religious views which existed between their Bishop and the clergy of St. Saviour's. The Rev. Richard Ward was the first Vicar of St. Saviour's. Shortly after his appointment he was joined by the Rev. Richard Gell Macmullen, and other Anglican clergymen. Two lay gentlemen, Mr. Haigh and Mr. Wilkinson, lived also at the clergy-house at St. Saviour's. These gentlemen had the courage of their growing convictions. In proportion as Catholic truths dawned upon their own minds, they courageously communicated them to the members of their congregation. The catechetical instructions of Mr. Macmullen were very effective and practical, and full of sound Catholic doctrine. All Saints' day 1846 fell upon a Sunday. Mr. Macmullen was appointed to preach. The subject of his sermon was "Intercessory prayer by the Saints below and the Saints above." Towards the close of his discourse, the following words, in substance, were spoken: "What comfort to us who are struggling, to know that the prayers of those who have reached the eternal shore are offered on our behalf; for those who covet purity of heart to remember that the Blessed Virgin is interceding for them; for the penitent to think of St. Peter asking pardon for those who have erst denied their

Lord ; for the Christian Priest toiling for souls to know that the Apostle of the Gentiles, once in labours abundant on earth, now pleads in heaven the cause of those who strive to follow in His steps."

After much prayer and earnest inquiry, Mr. Macmullen resolved to enter the Catholic Church. For that true Mother he afterwards worked well as Canon Macmullen of the diocese of Westminster. Mr. Macmullen was joined in his resolution by Mr. Haigh and Mr. Wilkinson. The three were received into the Church on the Feast of the Circumcision, 1847. Mr. Minster was appointed Vicar of St. Saviour's in 1848. He entered upon his office, determined to labour for souls, to promote the unity of his church, to teach all Catholic doctrines, to popularize the great mystery of the Incarnation, and to bring home to the hearts of the people the humiliations of the Eternal Son. He resolved also to re-establish the collegiate or community rule of life in the clergy house. He fixed his eyes on the Rev. George J. Lloyd Crawley as one who would be likely to prove a fitting auxiliary. Mr. Crawley agreed to become Mr. Minster's curate. He was to receive food and raiment, and a room at the house, but no money. Mr. Seton Rooke was also appointed curate of St. Saviour's. In 1849 the cholera visited Leeds. The clergy of St. Saviour's were indefatigable in their labours among the sick and dying. God blessed their good intentions. Their gift of faith was soon to ripen to maturity. They thought the Anglican Church to be their mother, and they laboured in her service with unfailing devotedness. They sought to quicken into living action shadows and imitations of Catholic rites, but disappointment followed upon their efforts. Their intentions were sincere, and as such God took them into merciful account.

The evening of April 2, 1851, closed upon an extraordinary scene in St. Anne's Catholic church, Leeds, the predecessor of the present Cathedral. A large congregation was assembled within its walls. Before its altar seven Anglican clergymen knelt to make their public profession of the Catholic faith. They were:—the Rev. Thomas Minster, M.A., Catherine College, Cambridge; the Rev. George Lloyd Crawley, of Christ Church, Oxford; the Rev.

Seton Rooke, M.A., of Oriel College, Oxford ; the Rev. Henry Combs, M.A., Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford; the Rev. Richard Ward, M.A., Oxford, first Vicar of St. Saviour's ; the Rev. W. H. Lewthwaite, M.A., Cambridge ; and the Rev. Mr. Neville, a Graduate of Oxford. With these clergymen, Mr. Lewington, lay-assistant at St. Saviour's, Mr. William Long, Mr. John Atkinson, and other members of St. Saviour's Congregation, together with the matron and assistant matron of the orphanage, presented themselves for reception into the Catholic Church. The presence of Dr. Newman, who had come from Birmingham to receive these converts, gave a special interest to the touching ceremonial of that evening. Addressing himself principally to those who had just been received into the Catholic Church, Dr. Newman spoke of the great change from light to darkness, from peace to warfare. "Any one who at sea, for days and nights, had heard the billows beating at the side of the vessel, and then came into the port, knew what a strange stillness it was, when the continual noise of the billows had ceased. When a bell stopped, there was a kind of fulness of silence, which was most grateful from the contrast." And he prayed that they all, having long sought, having at last found, might "go on from strength to strength, from grace to grace."

Before proceeding to tell of the founding of the Oblate house in Leeds shortly after this memorable event, it seems well to recall some of the names given above. Mr Crawley, getting into conversation with Father Cooke on the way to some religious function in Clifford, ended by becoming an Oblate. He spent his noviceship at Nancy in France. He afterwards worked as a missionary in Ireland, and in several places in Great Britain. He was in charge of the new Mission of Kilburn, then almost in the country, in its beginnings in 1865, and he remained there for many years. In Yorkshire in 1874 he told us (among many useful things) how at St. Saviour's he used to fast in such a way as no one would ever have allowed him to fast when a Catholic. He died in November 1874, at Mount Saint Mary's, Leeds, quite close to St. Saviour's. He is buried at Sicklinghall.

Another curate of St. Saviour's became the well-known Father Austin Rooke, of Haverstock Hill, London, who, in "St. Dominic's white wool," preached the evening sermon for the opening of the sanctuary of St. Mary's Church, Leeds, in September 1866. A third curate, Rev. Henry Combs, became a dear friend of Father Cooke's, and was often a welcome visitor in Oblate houses. Many of his books are in the library at Sicklinghall, with inscriptions in various languages, one of them being, "Oh, pray for the peace of Jerusalem!"

Mr. Lewthwaite, of Clifford, joined the Fathers of Charity. Mr. William Long is still well-remembered as foremost in all Catholic works in Leeds, a member of the first School Board, and an unchanging helper and adviser in all the works undertaken by Father Pinet and others at St. Mary's. Mr. John Atkinson became an Oblate Lay Brother, and died a holy death in Ireland in 1872.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MOUNT ST. MARY'S, 1851.

WHILST the reception at St. Anne's of all those converts from Anglicanism was stirring up the religious world in opposing senses, the little community of Oblates of Mary at Everingham was, says Father Cooke, pursuing its daily routine of quiet missionary duty. There was a longing among its members that an opportunity might be afforded to them to engage in work more in harmony with the spirit and special end of their vocation (the evangelizing of the poor) than that which offered itself in the well-ordered and beautiful village at Everingham. They set their hearts upon a field being opened to their labour somewhere amidst the crowds of perishing souls, with which they had reason to fear many of the great manufacturing districts of Yorkshire abounded. God was about to hear their prayers, and to accomplish their desires in this matter. An accidental meeting, in a railway carriage, between one of the converts of St. Saviour's (the Rev. George Crawley) and Father Cooke was the means which God employed to open a field of congenial labour for the Oblates of Mary in Leeds. An invitation was then given by Mr. Crawley to Fr. Cooke, to visit Leeds. Mr. Crawley said, "We are staying at the cottage-orphanage, which we have established, and to which we came when we left St. Saviour's vicarage, after our reception into the Church. Several of our late parishioners wish to become Catholics. As we are only laymen, the presence of a Priest amongst us for a few days will be very serviceable." Fr. Cooke arrived that very night at the cottage-orphanage at Hill House-place, in Leeds, which is a short distance from St. Saviour's, and was very

kindly received by Mr. Crawley and his fellow converts. A mattress laid on the kitchen floor was the best sleeping accommodation they could offer him, for they had no better for themselves. The orphans occupied the bed rooms, and an apartment was set aside for an oratory. Within this humble oratory, on the following morning, which was the opening of a bright May-day in 1851, Father Cooke said his first Mass in Leeds. That day, on examining the neighbourhood of St. Saviour's, he ascertained that there was no Catholic church in that large and thickly-peopled district. It seemed to him that it was a spot well suited as a labour field for the Oblates of Mary. He thereupon wrote to the Bishop of Beverley, the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, to inquire if he would be willing to allow the Oblates to establish a church in that locality. With his Lordship's leave, an unoccupied beer shop and its dancing room were opened as a temporary church on October 22, 1851, Canon Oakeley preaching a special sermon on the occasion.

Father Cooke, in the twelfth chapter of his second volume, relates many striking and edifying stories of conversions wrought in the early days, when he and other Oblate Fathers were working in a very poor church and house, in a very poor quarter, at the foot of Richmond Hill in Leeds. Of this hill, he goes on to tell us that it is one of the highest points in Leeds or its vicinity. From it a view is gained of the whole town and of the surrounding country for miles. This hill summit was famous in the days of the Civil War. Here the Marquis of Newcastle pitched his camp, which was captured by General Fairfax when he seized the town of Leeds on 23 January 1643. The position fell back again shortly afterwards into the hands of the Royalists.

On the morning of 24 May 1853, the feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, another camp-tent is pitched on the summit of Richmond Hill. From beneath its white folds issues the sacred symbol of warfare and victory—the Cross of Jesus Christ—borne by youthful hands, and followed by a long train of levites and of Priests. A venerable Pontiff, of holy and imposing aspect, closes the line of the procession. The smoke of the ancient battles that often

capped these heights in gloom, now gives way to wreathing clouds of fragrant incense, and songs of war give place to the chanting of those psalms and hymns which the Church appoints for the ceremonial of blessing the foundations on which are to rise the walls of her new temples. Such was the beautiful and impressive ceremonial which on that day was being performed on the *plateau* of Richmond Hill, which thenceforward was to be called Mount St. Mary's.

On that day the foundations of a church of cathedral proportions were blessed by the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, Bishop of Beverley. Slowly but steadily grew the holy building into size, shape, and symmetry, not however without having to bear the brunt of a storm of obstacles. Even the elements seemed to combine against it. On May 2, 1854, it was struck by a thunderbolt, which damaged the building very seriously, and even killed some of the workmen. Other trials were not wanting, and there were forebodings of ultimate failure, but the great church, though not finished, was ready to be opened for divine worship in July 1857.

Monseigneur de Mazenod himself visited England for the opening of the new Church. The ceremony was appointed to take place on a Wednesday, as the day of the week most convenient for Leeds people. By a happy coincidence it was the feast of St. Martha, the sister of St. Lazarus, in whose honour the Bishop of Marseilles had lately built a church in his episcopal city.

The morning of July 29, 1857, opened upon unusual sights amidst the busy manufacturing hives of eastern Leeds. Streets which were not beautiful put on beauty for the occasion. Triumphal arches were erected at different points along the line which was to be traversed by the carriages of his Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, and of the Bishop of Marseilles. Vast multitudes were in the streets in holiday dress. The mill owners of that quarter of Leeds had considerably given a holiday to their employés for that day. The carriage of the Bishop of Marseilles was the first to arrive. Loud and hearty was the greeting which welcomed his lordship's advent to St. Mary's Mount. In presence of such a sight, he could scarcely believe himself to be in a Protestant land. The loud-ringing plaudits which

came from a distance soon announced the approach of Cardinal Wiseman. The hill-summit on which St. Mary's stands, and which is approached from the street level by a flight of fifty steps, was the place of meeting of the two illustrious prelates. The scene was one which neither could forget. Leeds lay in view before them, clad in its gown of smoke. There was nothing of symmetry or beauty about it, but to a thoughtful glance the aspect which it wore bespoke a greatness far more impressive than art's beautifying hand, or nature's flowers or foliage could give to it. It lay before them in the giant grandeur of its marvellous industries. But more impressive than the sight of countless workshops, was that of the workers themselves, as they knelt in their thousands on the slopes of St. Mary's Mount, to receive the benediction of Westminster's Archbishop, and of the Bishop of Marseilles. Another long continued burst of greeting announced the arrival of the saintly Bishop of the diocese, the Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, to whose sanctions, blessings and encouragements the Oblate mission of Mount St. Mary's, Leeds, owes under God, in great part, its existence. At the High Mass, the sermon was preached by Cardinal Wiseman. His future successor in the see of Westminster, Dr. Manning, preached the evening discourse. The new and beautiful church of St. Mary was thus launched auspiciously, like a noble ship on the waters of its career.

By the year 1857, or soon after, there were several Irish or English or Scotch Oblate priests taking part in the work at Leeds and elsewhere. Some of the French Fathers had been recalled to France, or had died at their posts. There began to be known more familiar names :—Fathers Kirby, James Gubbins, Noble, Bennett, Healy, Hickey, and Redmond. Father Pinet, a French-Canadian, gave over thirty years' devoted service at St. Mary's, Leeds, from about the year 1858. It was he who supervised the completing of the church, and the building of the sanctuary. It was he who organized the arrangements for the great day already mentioned, when, in September 1866, the great corona of lights shone over that vast and high sanctuary in which were the Archbishop of Westminster, and the Bishop of Beverley, and over a hundred priests.

The provision of a church on Richmond Hill, with a resident community, was a source of many blessings to the neighbourhood, with its large population of "factory hands," as men call them. Touchingly edifying, under the influence of religion and of Irish traditions, were the lives of many of the factory girls of St. Mary's. In Father Pinet's time, they still wore those shawls which he, arriving from another country, thought so becoming to good Catholic girls. From distant parts of Leeds, in the early years, many friends went to St. Mary's, and helped in the foundation of the Mission. The names of Jackson (at Mr. W. S. Jackson's grave at Sicklinghall we have seen his brother the Protestant Canon from Leeds), Hirst, Gilston, Long, Galli, Blakey, Gosse, Hinchliffe, de Macedo, Bradley, and others, along with that of Father O'Donnell, of St. Patrick's church, are still gratefully remembered.

In the beginning Father Kirby or others of the Leeds community did duty at Hunslet, before it was possible for the Bishop to make it a separate parish.

In later years the house of the Oblate Fathers was completed, and, in addition to the convent, with its large orphanage and parochial schools, the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception built St. Mary's Training College for Teachers.

One of the places which Bishop de Mazenod visited, after the opening of St. Mary's in Leeds, was Edinburgh, where he had a conversation with Bishop Gillis. The Oblates were in 1857 serving the Mission of Galashiels, near Melrose and near Abbotsford. Father Bradshaw, in a letter written some years ago, said in reference to Mother Henrietta Kerr: "She was the daughter of Lord Henry Kerr, who lived at Huntlyburn, near Galashiels. She was such a pious young lady that I was not surprised when she became a nun. Father Mangin was with me for two years at Galashiels. Then he left for Canada." There is kindly mention of the Oblate Fathers in the Life of Mother Henrietta Kerr. The priests of Galashiels in those days were chaplains at Abbotsford, where some of the Oblate Fathers found, once more together, Hope-Scott and Manning, the "two eyes" whom Gladstone mourned as lost to him, when they left him behind in the English Establishment. Lady Henry Kerr

was Hope-Scott's sister, and when she was dying in Edinburgh in 1858, Father Noble of Galashiels was with her, as well as Bishop Gillis. Hope-Scott, says Mr. Ornsby, his biographer (telling of his appreciation of the religious orders), "showed the greatest regard for the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate, who were for nine years in charge of the Mission." But Father Cooke, no less than the Founder himself, desired work quite in agreement with the special vocation of their Institute. The Fathers obtained leave, therefore, to withdraw from Galashiels, and to take up duty in Leith, where, since 1860, they have been employed in much the same ministry, and school-building, and church-building, as in Leeds, Liverpool, and London.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IRELAND.

IN December 1855, Father Cooke, in obedience to the wishes of Bishop de Mazenod, visited Ireland in order to try to introduce the Oblates into this country. They had given Missions, not only in Leeds, but in Bradford, Manchester, Liverpool, London, Halifax, Edinburgh, Perth, Dundee, and other places ; but they had not yet given one in Ireland, although, somehow, young men had come to them from Ireland, and were already professed priests and lay Brothers. When he came to Dublin, Father Cooke asked leave to say Mass at " John's Lane," where he made the acquaintance of the Augustinian Fathers, and their Prior, Dr. Martin Crane, afterwards Bishop of Sandhurst. Dr. Crane invited the Oblates to give a Mission in his church in May 1856, and so the Augustinian Fathers—whose own new church, running now from John's Lane into Thomas Street, is such an ornament to Dublin—were the means of introducing the Oblates into Ireland. The Mission, which lasted a month, was preached, with remarkable success, by Fathers Cooke, Arnoux, Fox and James Gubbins. Bishop O'Connor, O.S.A. (once Vicar Apostolic of Madras, then living in retirement with the Augustinians), the Prior, and also Mgr. Yore, Vicar General, took much interest in the proposed new foundation, and they mentioned Kilmainham as a district where a public church was badly wanted. After the Mission, when Father Cooke mentioned the matter to Archbishop Cullen, his Grace gave his consent with much pleasure to the project of founding a House for Missions, and opening a public church, in the Kilmainham district. The Archbishop had been himself concerned, he said, for

the railway men at Inchicore who were at such a distance from the nearest church, the parish church of St. James.

Inchicore was and is the central *dépôt* of workshops for the construction of railway carriages, locomotives, etc., of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company. A thousand men were employed in these works. They were Irishmen for the most part, all clever and highly intelligent, but some who had been employed in English foundries had been brought into dangerous contact with atheists and unbelievers—and had fallen away from the love and practice of religious duties. God guided the Oblates to this new field for missionary zeal.

With borrowed money, Father Cooke bought a farmhouse, and some acres of land, on a part of the Naas Road, which is now Tyrconnell Road, and is included, with all the Kilmainham township, within the Dublin municipal boundary. On the first Sunday after the purchase, Mass was said for the people in a room of the farm house. As there was no doubt there would be a larger congregation the following Sunday, Father Cooke took advice as to the best means of providing for it. A young carpenter undertook to have a large wooden chapel erected by the coming Sunday, provided that the men of the railway works lent their aid in constructing it. A cheerful response came from the railway men. Materials for the temporary building were on the ground on Tuesday, 24 June 1856, the Feast of St. John the Baptist. That evening at six o'clock, after their regular day's labour, seven hundred men from the railway works and the neighbourhood of Inchicore, presented themselves to offer their services. They were all skilled workmen. From six till nine they laboured assiduously every evening that week at the new building. They completed their labour of love by ten o'clock on Saturday evening, and so a building, capable of accommodating seven or eight hundred people, had been raised by these devoted men in sixteen hours. The following morning, the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, High Mass was sung in the new temporary church of Mary Immaculate, in presence of an over-flowing congregation. But the most gratifying feature of the whole proceeding was the wonderful

awakening of faith and practical religion in the breasts of these workmen, which accompanied their cheerful labours in raising the new sanctuary of Mary Immaculate. Many were causes of surprise to one another as they took their places for the first time in the ranks of the new church-builders. "What, are you a Catholic?" was a frequent exclamation addressed by one working man to another. Alas! though brethren in creed, many of them knew it not until their joint labours for their common mother, Holy Church, revealed this fact to their knowledge. "Were you not surprised when you visited the new church which was built in four days?" was a question which a wife addressed to her husband who had been absent when the church was being constructed. "Yes, I was," replied her husband, "but there was something which surprised me much more than the new church; it was that I saw A. B. on his knees saying his prayers." A. B. was one who was regarded as an infidel; but he lent a helping hand in building the new church, and he got his reward in the restored gift of living faith working by contrite love. A mission given in the temporary church by the Fathers of Inchicore crowned with new blessings their early labours in that locality. The evening exercises of the mission, especially, were attended by the men in crowds. Hundreds had to listen to the sermons at the windows or doors outside. It was during the mission that Archbishop Cullen paid his first visit to the new establishment of the Oblates. He expressed surprise and delight at what he saw, and gave his blessing to the good work.

We cannot quit this portion of our narrative of the Inchicore foundation, without placing a wreath of affectionate remembrance around the memory of the saintly priest, Father Richard. He had been for several years Master of Novices at the chief Noviciate House of the Oblates of Mary in France. In delicate health he was transferred to England. An improvement having taken place in his health, he was appointed Novice Master in the Noviciate House which had then been lately opened at Sicklinghall, in Yorkshire. Father Richard was the first local Superior of the new community at Inchicore. Alas,

it was not God's will to allow him to remain long the light and the benediction of that new establishment. Signs of an approaching early death began to be manifest in his mien and manner. They appeared more in lights than in shades, in joyous hopeful utterances than in sad and troubled ones. One day, while walking in the garden with Father Cooke, "Father," he said, and his face shone with strange brightness as he spoke, "for days past I have been experiencing a deep sense of interior peace, which I cannot describe. I am sure this great grace has come to me through the hands of my Immaculate Mother, whom you know I love so much. What does it mean? Is it a sign that my exile is soon to end?" Such in truth it was: it was one of those dawn-beams that flash suddenly in the darkness, and bespeak with certainty the coming day. Before that week had passed away, Father Cooke, who was then preaching a course of sermons in Dublin, was hurriedly called to Father Richard's bedside. It seems that he had been seized with a violent paroxysm, and had lain for an hour on the point of death. As Fr. Cooke entered the room the worst symptoms had passed away. Seeing the change for the better, he said, "You are not going to die this time." "No," replied Father Richard playfully, "and I am sorry for it, for I had made all my preparations, and I shall have to begin all over again." A few days more brought him face to face with the final scene of his holy life. His death agony was a touching and instructive scene! He suffered much, but there was no complaint. *I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ*, were the words which were among the most frequent of his death-bed utterances. He lay buried in silent prayer, and if his lips did not move, one might think him dead. At that moment there came from the adjoining church the sound of children's voices, chanting a hymn; a gleam of joy passed over the features of the dying Priest. Opening his eyes, he said to the Provincial, "Listen, Father! How sweetly those children sing the praises of God. Oh, how I love to hear the singing of God's praises!" These were his last words. What he loved to hear he now hears, we may feel sure, the praises of God, in which he joins for evermore.

Father Richard died in April 1857, just a few months before Bishop de Mazenod paid his first and last visit to Ireland. When the Founder of the Oblates arrived at Inchicore after the opening of the church in Leeds he found a great crowd assembled in front of the old farm-house, the Fathers' residence, to bid him welcome. The holy prelate was seized with deep emotion, under the influence of this most respectful, yet most cordial, welcome. He acknowledged that he had never experienced anything like it before. The next morning, which was Sunday, he celebrated Mass in the temporary wooden church. For one hour he was engaged in distributing Holy Communion. Tears flowed from his eyes as he beheld group after group, not only of devout women, but also of stalwart men, taking their places at the communion rail. On the following days he visited some of the great religious institutions of Dublin. Catholic Dublin took him by surprise. He had never in all his travels witnessed a greater display of private individual charity than during his round of visits to the establishments in that city, which owe their origin to the private munificence of the Catholics of Dublin. He beheld there, ministering to almost every form of human suffering, privation and need, noble institutions which derived their means of existence from one source only—the charitable generosity of Catholics. The churches which he visited in Dublin were not, it is true, to be compared in architectural structure to the glory and beauty of the monumental churches of France. But he witnessed in the churches of Dublin a manifestation of piety the like of which he acknowledged he had rarely seen elsewhere. The deep loving reverence of the people for their Priests was an object also of his admiration and frequent eulogy. The Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Cullen, was most demonstrative in his attentions to Monseigneur de Mazenod. His Grace invited him to officiate at vespers in his cathedral. This gave Monseigneur de Mazenod an opportunity of beholding a great Dublin congregation. The number and the reverent attitude of men at the services of the church in Dublin impressed him profoundly. It was a striking proof to him of the depth and sincerity of Irish faith. He did not fail

to visit the good Augustinian Fathers, at whose house he met the venerable Bishop O'Connor, at whose hands the Oblates of Mary had received many proofs of kindness. One of the places which Monseigneur de Mazenod visited with the largest amount of interest, was the great railway foundry and carriage-building works at Inchicore. Here he was able to behold an aspect of Irish faith which was an accomplishment of an ideal, long cherished in his thoughtful and apostolic mind, namely, the ennobling of labour by faith. There were then employed at these works some twelve hundred men, the great majority of whom were Catholics. As he entered workshop after workshop the workers ceased momentarily from their labour, in order to kneel and ask his blessing. Among these brave and intelligent sons of skilled and honourable toil, his sharp glance recognized very many, for they were there by the hundred, to whom he had the great consolation of administering the Holy Communion on the previous Sunday. He was not ignorant of the debt of gratitude which the Fathers of his society owed to the working men of Inchicore—for the story of the wooden chapel was well-known to him. Though his chief attention during his stay in Ireland was, as a matter of course, directed to subjects concerning the interests of religion, and the well-being of the religious body of which he was the founder, he nevertheless did not omit to take note of matters connected with the temporal well-being of that country. From his early days he had an eye for, and a keen appreciation of, the grand and beautiful in nature's works. He was particularly struck by his first sight of the glorious Bay of Dublin. He said it reminded him of the Bay of Naples, with the beauties of which he was so well acquainted. His visit to the environs of Dublin elicited frequent expressions of admiration from his lips, and he took his departure with regret from a land which he had commenced to love, as if it had become for him a second home.

After Father Richard, Father Arnoux was Superior at Inchicore, where he was greatly esteemed. In the sixties the Superiors were Father L. C. Prideaux Fox, and Father James Gubbins. The Crib at Inchicore began to attract

the faithful in Father Fox's time, for his artistic taste and ingenuity were as remarkable as his love of simple and popular devotions, though brought up outside the Church. Father Gubbins built the fine national school for boys, which is still used. Before his time, the House of Retreat of Mary Immaculate had been built and solemnly opened, Archbishop Cullen once more, and Bishop Leahy, O.P., of Dromore (the preacher), taking part in a great public function on the occasion. It was the intention of Father Cooke that the new and large community house should be used for laymen's retreats.

When the Oblate Fathers first came to Ireland, Missions were not common and frequent, as they are now. In circumstances of much happy toil, and occasionally of hardships, the Oblates preached Missions up and down the country, with very visible and lasting results. The great Mission in Cork in 1863 is not quite forgotten even yet. In the Cathedral there were 26,000 Communions. Forty confessors, with the Bishop at their head, were as busily occupied as the missionaries.

In the seventies, at Inchicore, Father Timothy Ryan began the new church. It was opened for worship under the superiorship of Father Shinnors, whose efforts were helped by Edmund Dwyer Gray, whom Father Ryan, shortly before his death, had received into the church. The wooden building, which for nearly a quarter of a century was the scene of much devotion, still serves a devotional purpose, for it houses the Christmas Crib, and the erections connected therewith.

The new church remained for many years incomplete, a temporary wooden wall closing it in at the east end. When Father Ring was Superior, he completed the church by adding the beautiful sanctuary and side chapels, and the sacristy with its heating chamber. In later years, by the sale to the Dublin Corporation of some of the land bought by Father Cooke, the Fathers were enabled to pay off the debt remaining on the church, and so it was consecrated in 1903 by the present Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Reverend Dr. Walsh, who had also blessed the foundation stone of the sanctuary in 1892.

In 1859 a work of a special kind was undertaken in Ireland by Oblate Fathers and Brothers, under the direction of Father Cooke as Provincial. A Dublin Committee, of which the chairman was the distinguished Catholic lawyer, afterwards known as Lord O'Hagan, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, asked the newly-arrived religious community of Inchicore to undertake the charge of a reformatory school for boys. Sir John Lentaigue, who also interested himself in the project, remained for many long years the Government Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Since 1859 the Oblates have been therefore in charge of St. Kevin's Reformatory at Glencree, in the Wicklow hills. In 1870 the parish priest of Philipstown (afterwards P.P. of Baltinglass, and V.G. of the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin), Dr. Denis Kane, a priest of rare distinction and ardent zeal, succeeded in getting the various authorities concerned to turn the disused prison and cavalry barracks in Philipstown into a Catholic reformatory school, and to invite the Oblates to be the managers. So it is that since 1870 the Oblate Fathers and Brothers have been engaged in the very difficult, responsible, and necessarily thankless task of teaching and training the many hundreds, or rather thousands, of boys under sixteen, whom magistrates or judges have thought it necessary to send to those two institutions.

In 1860 the noviciate house of the Oblates in the United Kingdom was transferred to a place which they named Glen Mary, near Delgany, County Wicklow. In 1863 a change was made again to a more suitable locality, and a better house. Belmont House, Stillorgan, County Dublin, had been a junior house in connection with the great college of All Hallows. At Belmont—near the Dublin mountains, and looking upon Howth and Kingstown and the sea—the noviciate has remained since 1863.

Another Irish establishment is that now called the Missionary College of Mary Immaculate, at Belcamp Hall, Raheny, Co. Dublin. In 1880, at the time of the first expulsion of religious communities from France, a body of scholastics from Autun settled for a time in the Retreat

House, Inchicore. Afterwards, with all due permissions of course, they formed a completely separate community at Belcamp Hall. Later on they were transferred to a more suitable place for them on the continent, and Belcamp returned to lay hands. But in 1893 it was decided to move the Junior House of Studies for England and Ireland from Kilburn where a house had been built for a juniorate by Miss Walker, the sister of a great benefactor of the Tower Hill Mission. In October 1893 about a score of young students from the Kilburn house took up their quarters at Belcamp Hall, and there ever since Juniors have been studying in preparation for the noviciate, many of them passing the examinations of the Royal or the National University.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TOWER HILL.

THE first visit of Monseigneur de Mazenod to England was in 1850. Accompanied by Father Casimir Aubert, he left Marseilles on the 1st of June in that year. Various affairs brought them through the east of France into Germany and Belgium. The Duke de Rohan—who was one of Monseigneur's earliest friends—had become a Priest and was promoted to the Cardinalate. He died and was buried at Besançon. His tomb was an object of pious interest to Monseigneur when he passed through that place. At Strasbourg he was the honoured guest of the Bishop. The Redemptorist Fathers at Liège and Brussels extended hospitality towards him with great warmth and affectionate respect. He felt nowhere more at home than with them.

On the night of the 17th June he arrived in London. The next day he said Mass at the Oratory, where he made the acquaintance of Father Dalgairns, who was profuse in his friendly attentions, and introduced him to the Earl of Arundel, afterwards Duke of Norfolk. His lordship kindly conducted the visitor to the principal objects of interest in the west of London, including an inspection of the House of Commons. West London lay then in the bloom of its season of pleasure and display, but it made no impression on the heart of the missionary Bishop: his thoughts and sympathies turned to the London of courts and alleys, the London of the poor in the east end of the grand City. Thither he went, on a sort of missionary pilgrimage, accompanied by his devoted disciple, Father Aubert. In a Mile End omnibus, taken in Oxford Street, they rolled along by Holborn and Cheapside, and the Bank. Having traversed Cornhill and Leadenhall Street, they came to Aldgate and Whitechapel. Here they alighted, and went on foot through some of its bye-streets, swarming with human beings. Care and toil showed themselves in face and frame in these Whitechapel crowds. The very brows of children, in many instances, seemed careworn

and restless, whilst a forced precociousness peered from their withered and diminutive features, in which sin-germs were already, alas ! disclosing themselves. On it moves—that Whitechapel crowd—before the eyes of the pious and thoughtful travellers. What does it know of God and of His only Son Jesus Christ ? What does it know of its last end ? Is it even baptized ? Has it any faith save in what it sees, and touches, and eats, and drinks, and enjoys ? What ties of charity bind its component parts together ? are they like stones in the holy wall which God's hands build up, and which are bonded together in love ? or are they like those loose boulders that come from—nobody knows where—cast it may be by freak of flame or flood on lonely mountain surface, forming crowds by numbers, but each from each, and from all, abiding ever apart in cold and hardened isolation ? God's hand alone can bind soul to soul, heart to heart, each to all, and all to each, in the vast crowd of earth's pilgrims. He does so by binding together the individuals that compose the great crowd that no man can number, in unity of submission to one world-centre authority, whose throne is on the rock of Peter ; by leading them to worship before the one Great Altar on which the Lamb stands slain ; by guiding them to the same fountain-heads of sacramental grace, of whose waters all drink and are gladdened with a common joy and benediction, which unite them in communion with Himself, and with one another. Under the eye of heaven there is no grander sight than that of the crowd that believes, professes, and practices the truths of the Catholic faith ; at the same time there is no sadder sight than that of an unbelieving multitude, pursuing its way blindly through life's mazes, on towards an abyss.

The old missionary spirit was stirred in the depths of his soul, as Monseigneur de Mazenod gazed, for the first time, on those groups of Whitechapel denizens. He felt in his heart that no more fitting sphere for the missionary labours of his Oblates could anywhere be found, than in the midst of these toiling, poverty-stricken multitudes.

The time had not yet come for an Oblate Mission in London, but, before he died Cardinal Wiseman had the

consolation of authorizing Father Cooke to establish a Mission in the neighbourhood of the docks and of Tower Hill. He also mentioned to him as showing his regard for the Founder of the Oblates that a letter written from London, in the summer of 1850, by the Bishop of Marseilles to Pius IX. in person, had decided the Pope to leave Cardinal Wiseman in England to finish his work, instead of bringing him to Rome as a Cardinal of the Curia.

The Tower Hill church may be considered the successor of the old Virginia Street Chapel, which about 1852 had to make way, with other buildings, for St. Katharine's Dock. The new church of SS. Mary and Michael was provided about the same time, and in a place where it was very badly wanted—Commercial Road. But it was a mile away from the large Irish population in the neighbourhood of St. Katharine's Docks. The children of poor, overworked and neglectful parents had been growing up in spiritual distress for a dozen years when the Tower Hill Mission was founded. "I hope the Cardinal will give you charge of Rosemary Lane," the zealous Father Cuddon, of Soho, had said to Father Cooke, and so it came to pass. The visitor to Royal Mint Street in our day is not to suppose that he sees it as it was when called Rosemary Lane. All the streets in that whole district have been changed completely. We have seen them renewing their appearance under our own eyes, whilst many courts, and Little Prescot Street, have disappeared altogether.

Father Cooke tells us of his first visit to the district of which he was commissioned to take spiritual charge. It was in August 1864. The first object that fixed his attention was the hoary old Tower of London, that rose to the view of the mental eye in the haze of its nine centuries of marvellous history, whilst to the external glance it stood out a vast and gloomy pile, casting its shadows over the waters of the turbid Thames. It was not an object to be gazed upon and forgotten : it was England's history of nine centuries written in stone. On its stone-faced pages many records were written by Time's finger—all glorious for the Militant Church of Christ—records of deeds of Christian heroism of the loftiest martyr-type. The closing days of

many a beautiful life find a chronicler in that old Tower. It has been telling, and it still tells, how confessors bore persecution's brunt, how martyrs prepared for the fight and the victory and the crown ; how they looked and how they spoke on the mornings of the days of their martyrdom. It tells us the story of the most glorious of the days of a Fisher—of a More—of a Philip Howard of Arundel—of an Oliver Plunkett, and of a host of the sons of Saints Bruno, Benedict, Francis, Dominic, Ignatius, and of many of England's secular priesthood, and of devout laymen of the three kingdoms, confessors of the faith. The presence of such a monument in the centre of the new mission of the Oblates of Mary, in the east of London, served to determine the title it was to bear, viz., "The Tower Hill Mission."

But whilst hoary memories shed an air of venerable antiquity around the Hill of the Tower, a deeper interest in the locality was awakened in the breasts of those who came hither to labour for God and souls, by the busy hum of those human masses with which its precincts were astir. Very many were denizens of the vicinity, and others were voyagers from every clime under the sun, coming from or going to the great ships that were afloat in the huge dock-basins, stretching from the moat of the Tower far to the eastern extremities of London. A striking illustration of the great fact of the Church of all times being the Church of all peoples, is furnished daily to the thoughtful mind on Tower Hill. That same religion that was loved by the kings and saints and martyrs of the Tower, is loved by those speakers of all tongues, and those representatives of all the nationalities of the world, who traverse the hill of the Tower day by day.

The new district of the Oblates of Mary extended its western boundary to London Bridge, and its eastern to the London Docks. Its northern limits were Aldgate and High-street, Whitechapel ; on the south it was bounded by the Thames. The district having been secured, it remained to find a suitable site for the different structures that would be required for the objects of the mission. Months of weary search and inquiry elapsed before any

satisfactory solution of this difficulty presented itself. Day after day Father Cooke visited the streets and laneways of the new district, without being able to discover a single vacant spot that would answer the purposes in view. During this time he received an introduction to Mr. Charles Walker, of Keppel-street. He was one of those remarkable laymen whom God raises up at divers times to do some special work for the divine glory and the interests of religion. Possessed of large wealth, he spent little of it upon himself. Simple to austerity in all his habits, he had a great soul and a large heart where works of charity were concerned. His works of charity, by predilection, were those by which the needs of perishing souls were supplied. His aim was to bring religion home to the masses of the people, by aiding in the establishment of new missions, and the building of churches and schools in great centres of population. For several months Father Cooke had been vainly endeavouring to find a site. He was a frequent traveller during that time by the morning omnibuses going to Whitechapel. One morning, as a matter of economy, he resolved to walk. When passing along Holborn he felt fatigued, and called into the office of Mr. Walker to rest. He had scarcely entered when he was thus greeted, "I am very glad you are come; I was about to write to you. I have just read an advertisement in the *Standard*, which announces that in Great Prescott-street a site for a new building is to be sold. I think it will answer your purpose." The site spoken of was evidently a suitable one. Mr. Walker had made no promise of assistance up to this point. But without generous help on his part, Father Cooke felt that he could not entertain the prospect of purchasing the piece of vacant ground. Relying on all that he had heard of the generosity of Mr. Walker, to whom he was yet a comparative stranger, he ventured to make a bold proposal in the following words: "Mr. Walker, if you give a thousand pounds, I will undertake, with God's blessing, to purchase the site which is to be sold in Great Prescott-street." The noble answer of Charles Walker was, "I will." From the description of the property given in the *Standard*, it seemed likely to cost about three thousand

pounds. By the promised donation and a loan, the site could be secured. Within two hours of the interview the purchase was completed. The ink was scarcely dry on the agreement when a rich Rabbi presented himself at the office of the vendors, to purchase it as a site for a synagogue. Great was his disappointment when he found the place had already been disposed of. It ought to be recorded here that in later years Miss Susan Walker (the sister of Mr. Charles Walker) gave £1,000 towards the completion of the Chapel of Our Lady of Grace, attached to the Church of the English Martyrs. Another generous benefactor of church and schools at Tower Hill was Mr. Stuart Knill, afterwards Lord Mayor of London, and Baronet. Owing to local circumstances, it was considered prudent, by the authorities of the diocese, that the Oblates of Mary should not commence work in their new district until some months after their appointment. The time for making a beginning had now arrived. This beginning was a very humble one. On the eve of the Feast of the Annunciation 1865, possession was obtained of a small tenement of three rooms in a house in Postern-row, Tower Hill, immediately over the spot where formerly stood Postern Gate in the London Wall. One of these rooms, which overlooked the moat in the Tower, was selected as a temporary chapel, in which an altar of humble construction was improvised that same evening. The next morning Father Cooke said Mass, the first celebrated on Tower Hill, perhaps for centuries. Only a dozen people were present, as notice had been given only to that number. The public had not yet been informed that the Tower Hill mission had been confided to the Oblates of Mary. When the news went abroad among the Catholic population, there were the liveliest manifestations of delight on the part of these poor people. The humble lodging of the Fathers on Tower Hill was besieged by hundreds, who came to bid them welcome. They wished to hear some words of edification. But the little garret chapel could not contain the crowd who were eager to hear the voice of their Priest. Somebody suggested that they should repair to an open archway under the London and Blackwall railway, close at hand. Thither they went, and

under that railway-arch, while trains were passing one another overhead at intervals of two or three minutes, Father Cooke had the great consolation of addressing the first public discourse to his new parishioners, and of opening the Tower Hill mission. Now that he was free to visit the Catholic inhabitants of the district, he had an opportunity of witnessing scenes of such misery, and at the same time of such patient endurance, that it would be hard to find them surpassed anywhere in the world. Rosemary-lane and its countless courts and alleys was a world of misery in itself. It bore at the time an evil repute, though amidst all its drawbacks exalted and purest virtues burned brightly in the hearts and lives of very many.

In the early days of the Tower Hill mission, Father Cooke secured the valuable co-operation of his *confrère* Father Ring. Through their joint action a temporary iron church was raised on the newly-purchased site in Great Prescott-street, a portion of which was used as a school on week-days. The means of education for the poor children of the locality, was one of the first boons which the Fathers felt they should endeavour to supply. Over a thousand children wandered through the courts of Rosemary-lane and its neighbourhood, without any possibility of Catholic education. These children belonged, for the most part, to some of the poorest classes ; at the same time the requirements of a congregation numbering over six thousand souls, seemed to make it necessary that the temporary iron church should be soon replaced by a permanent one. The question which then presented itself for solution to the Tower Hill Fathers was, whether they should first build a church, or schools. By building a church they would, whilst raising a temple to God and providing a place of worship for thousands of their people, also create a source of modest income for the support of the mission and their own support ; whereas, school buildings of the dimensions needed would impose a large immediate and permanent outlay. But then they thought that a delay in raising schools for the vast wandering population of their poor children, would result in the then rising generation of little ones being brought up in ignorance, and being thus lost to the faith. To avert

the chance of such an evil, the Fathers resolved to postpone the building of their church, and to take immediate steps for the erection of suitable schools, even though this resolution was sure to involve them in financial difficulties. They were encouraged in adhering to the project of building schools with the least possible delay, by an incident which took place at that time within the walls of their iron church. His Grace, the Most Rev. Dr. Manning, visited Tower Hill one Sunday afternoon. The iron church was packed with children, some nine hundred of whom were present to receive the Archbishop, for he had come expressly for them. He had scarcely finished his beautiful and touching address to these little ones, when with one voice they cried out, "A school! a school!" His Grace was deeply moved, and so were all present. The words of the prophet, "*The little ones have asked for bread,*" came forcibly to the mind. Happily that portion of the text which follows, "*and there was none to break it unto them*" (Lam. iv. 4), was not in this case to be fulfilled. Promises were made by his Grace and by the Fathers of the Mission, in favourable reply to the touching petition of that untaught multitude of poor children of Tower Hill.

It fell to the privileged share of the Fathers of the Tower Hill mission to be the ministers and dispensers, not only of that food and of those consolations by which the soul-life of the members of their flock was sustained and comforted, but also of that material food of which the impoverished dwellers in the courts of their district often stood sorely in need. In the year 1867 the cholera plague burst upon the east of London with a sudden intensity; homes in considerable numbers were deprived of their bread-winners, and starvation stared multitudes in the face. To endeavour to save the lives of the perishing poor of their neighbourhood became at once the duty of the Fathers of the Tower Hill mission. Whilst there was a rivalry of zeal on the part of all, there was one amongst the Fathers who carried away the palm of super-eminence in this charitable rivalry—Father Ring. He had a special gift of large-hearted sympathy for the suffering and poverty-stricken classes of society. At the same time, he was fertile in

successful devices in rendering that sympathy of practical avail to the sufferers whose woes and wants had awakened it. To the credit of the English nation be it said, that there is one grand sentiment of its old Catholicity that has never died out, amidst the storms and wreckages of post-reformation times—it is the sentiment of that charity that shows itself by alms-deeds. The harrowing privations left in the wake of the grim cholera plague in its strides through eastern London, aroused the generous sympathy of the wealthier classes of the metropolis. A Mansion House Relief Fund was started. The local relief committee, organised by Father Ring, was one of the first in the east of London to put itself into communication with the general committee of the Mansion House. The Vicars of four or five of the neighbouring Protestant churches were later in their application for the Mansion House relief for their poor. They were informed that a committee already existed at Great Prescott-street, Tower Hill, with which they should put themselves into communication, if they wished their poor people to become partakers of the benefit of the Mansion House funds. The residence of the Fathers in Great Prescott-street became thus the central relief depot of a great part of the east of London, for members of all denominations—of Protestants and Jews, as well as the Catholics. The meetings of the committee, which consisted of Catholic Priests and Protestant clergymen, and of lay Catholic and Protestant gentlemen, were also held at the Fathers' house. It was edifying to witness the perfect harmony in doing good which prevailed among all the members of the committee.

At a later period a frost famine prevailed among the labouring classes, and in an especial manner among those employed at the wharfs and docks. The shipping could not come up the Thames, and all work ceased for tens of thousands of hands. Another Mansion House fund was inaugurated ; Father Ring put himself into communication with the committee who managed it, as he had done on a previous occasion, and with the same signal results. It must be said that he was largely helped on both those occasions by the influential and kindly co-operation of Mr. Deputy

Young, the only Catholic member of the London Corporation. But besides those periods of general and exceptional destitution, there are always cases of appalling distress and misery to be dealt with by the Fathers of Great Prescott-street; not only have they to encounter the wretchedness of a poor east London district, but they are also continually meeting with most distressing cases of destitution among poor people coming from other countries. The chief landing stages for passenger steamers coming to London from Ireland, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, are in the Tower Hill district—at St. Katharine's and other adjacent wharfs. Many of these poor people arrive in London penniless, or nearly so. To the Priests' house they flock in their distress. The Priests' hall has witnessed many a scene of anguish and despair. What can the Priests do with no funds to meet those real and terrible wants? Immersed in serious difficulties themselves, owing to their efforts to save their own people, what can they do for those poor strangers? Yet they cannot allow them to perish of hunger. Sometimes it is the group of young innocent girls, who foolishly imagined that they were sure to find fine situations on their arrival in London, who knock at the door of the Fathers' house at an advanced hour in the evening to say they are starving and houseless; their last penny being spent, they have been turned out of their lodging houses. Sometimes it is the emigrant family from some Irish county, *en route* for New Zealand or some Australian port, who find themselves in unexpected difficulties, and who make their way to the Priests' house to be helped out of their embarrassments. From the earliest days of the Tower Hill mission, such has been the character of the wants to which the Priests of that mission have been called to minister. Alas, in many instances of real distress they were powerless to go beyond kind words of sympathy—or at most the giving of some inadequate help.

The promise made to those hundreds of children's voices, petitioning for a school, was not forgotten. Plans of schools for a thousand children were obtained from Mr. John Young. The foundation stone was laid by Princess Marguerite of

Orleans and her sister Princess Blanche, on 21 June 1870. The ceremony was reported in the leading morning papers. The opening of the spacious school buildings was the commencement of a new era in the Tower Hill mission. The Fathers had now in their hands, thanks to God, an effective instrument for improving the religious, moral, and intellectual condition of the rising Catholic population of their district.

Those great schools in Chamber Street, adjoining the church, still stand. In the years immediately preceding 1900, when Father O'Carroll was Superior, there was a great deal of anxiety in connection with them, for they were "condemned" by the Government Inspector, so much had the railway come between them and the free light and air. There were negotiations with the Education Department, the Duke of Norfolk (then Postmaster General), as President of the Catholic School Committee, and Mr. Hunnybun, as the Secretary, assisting the Superior in his interviews and correspondence. Eventually, by giving up to the school the site of a tribune of the church, and by spending about £6,000, received from the Railway Company, the original schools were made to satisfy the demands of the Education Department, and after some later alterations, they serve very well to this day, under an excellent head master, Mr. Crosbie, his assistants, and the devoted Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

The work done at Tower Hill by the ladies of "St. Antony's Settlement," 21 Great Prescot Street, deserves special mention in this place. Her Grace the Dowager Duchess of Newcastle, at the request of Cardinal Vaughan, went to live in the East End in 1893. She worked there, in the Tower Hill parish, for nearly twenty years. Even when her health had failed, and until her recent death, she brought into the country, to Woodford, from time to time, the members of her various clubs and guilds, and even from her sick bed she continued to uphold and direct the work of the Settlement. In 1905, when Father T. O'Ryan as Superior had to carry out alterations in the schools costing £1,150, the Duchess gave no less than £500 out of her own private means.

One of the principal workers with the Duchess in Prescott Street was Miss Clare Fortescue. When she left in 1902 to become Mrs. George F. Squire, she gave Father O’Ryan £800 to spend on cleaning the church, decorating the sanctuary, and installing the electric light and heating apparatus.

The parish of Tower Hill is, as it has always been, a poor parish. But in numbers it is not now (in 1913) what it was in the beginning, or even a few years ago. The Catholics are only 1,500 at present. At the founding of the mission they numbered over six thousand.

Having, in the briefest way, brought the history of church and schools down to date, we return to the early and general history of the parish, as told by Father Cooke. The iron church (of very curious zig-zag shape), in which Father Ring, Father Crane, and many others laboured for years, could not remain for ever. Those responsible for the observance of the city bye-laws were clamouring for its removal. The following letter from the Archbishop to Father Cooke was at length published :—

“ 8 YORK PLACE, W., *Dec. 3, 1872.*

“ REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

“ I cannot hesitate for a moment to give my heartiest commendation to your appeal for the building of the Church of the English Martyrs, Tower Hill. Every motive binds me to do so : first, the urgent spiritual needs of at least 6,000 people : secondly, the poverty and insufficiency of the building in which the Holy Mass is now celebrated ; thirdly, the great zeal shown by yourself and the other fathers in the completion of your magnificent schools.

“ I give my blessing with all my heart to your undertaking ; and I commend it very earnestly to the charity and generosity of the faithful.

“ Believe me,

“ Rev. and Dear Father,

“ Yours affectionately in Jesus Christ,

“ ✠ HENRY EDWARD,

“ *Archbishop of Westminster.*”

On the 22nd of June 1876, the anniversary of the martyrdom of Cardinal Fisher, on Tower Hill, the new church of the English Martyrs was solemnly opened by his Eminence Cardinal Manning, in presence of a large congregation. The Duke of Norfolk, whose ancestor, the saintly Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, was a prisoner for the faith for many years in the Tower, was also present, with many other members of the Catholic nobility.

In connection with the Tower Hill Mission, it is of interest to mention that at the south-end of the Minories—where the street opens upon Tower Hill and East Smithfield, there once stood a religious foundation called the Abbey of Grace. The site of that Abbey is now occupied by the Royal Mint.

William de Sancta Cruce, Abbot of the great Cistercian Monastery of Garendon, in Leicestershire, was, at the request of King Edward III, chosen the first Abbot of St. Mary of Graces in London. Whilst the shrine of our Lady of Barking, at the west of Tower Hill (and opposite Mark Lane Station of our day), was greatly frequented by pious crowds, the chapel of Our Lady of Graces was also a place of much resort on the part of the devout citizens of London. The church of the English Martyrs now stands within a distance of one hundred yards from the site once occupied by the inclosure of the Abbey of Our Lady of Graces, and within three times that distance from the existing fragments of the old Abbey of St. Clare, in the Minories (*i.e.*, Minoreesses), an abbey founded by Blanche, Queen of Navarre. In other parts of the district attached to the Tower Hill mission are churches of very ancient origin. The date of the foundation of St. Magnus near London Bridge, of St. Benet in Gracechurch-street, and of several other old churches of this district, is lost in the mist of distant ages. How rich is the inheritance of holy memories to which the church of the English Martyrs, Great Prescot Street, Tower Hill, is the rightful heir! How glorious the records of its ancestral line, receding back into ages remoter far than the period of England's foundation as one kingdom! Its walls are new, and its altars of recent structure, but its faith and worship are the same now as long centuries ago.

No history of these walls and altars new, no recent

history of the Tower Hill Mission, would be complete without mention of the great generosity of the Carthusian Order, some of whose members were among the first "English Martyrs." The debt on the Mission for site and buildings, and unforeseen expenses entailed by the nature of the soil, grew in the course of time to an enormous sum. In the years when Father Gaughren and Father James O'Reilly were Superiors, an appeal was made for financial help to the community of the Grande Chartreuse—and resulted in the generous promise of £12,000, as a free gift, to be paid in six yearly instalments. The great gift is not at all the less great in the eyes of those who know well that it is only a specimen of the benefactions of the silent sons of St. Bruno.

No mention of Tower Hill benefactors would be correct, if the names were omitted of the present Duke of Norfolk, the late Earl of Denbigh, the Marchioness of Londonderry, the Lady Herbert of Lea, the Duchess of Buccleuch, the Marchioness of Lothian, Lady Georgiana Fullerton, and Mr. Richard Devereux. The memory of their benefactions remains fresh among the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

CHAPTER XXIX.

KILBURN.

THE Oblates at Tower Hill were of opinion that a suburban mission would be a lawful and beneficial accompaniment to their undertaking in the East End. If a choice of times for the founding of a new establishment were absolutely at their disposal, they would not have chosen the moment when they were immersed in the difficulties of the Tower Hill foundation. But special opportunities for bringing such an important work to a satisfactory issue existed then, which it was more than likely would not present themselves later on. Whilst aiming at the forming, somewhere in the neighbourhood of London, of a religious establishment, the Oblates wished that their accomplishment of this design should become the occasion of the opening of a new mission in a suburb where one was needed. One evening, just before taking up duty at Tower Hill, Father Cooke was in a public room in his hotel when two gentlemen entered. One was an elderly English gentleman who usually resided on the Continent, the other was a young professional man, who lived in London; they were both Catholics. The younger man in reply to a question, said :—

“ My brother, who is a Priest of great experience, says that there is no suburb where a new mission and church are more required than at Kilburn.” This was the first time that the name of Kilburn fell upon Father Cooke’s ears. The next day he visited Kilburn, and found that the place seemed to be very suitable for the purposes he had in view. His wishes on the subject were placed before Cardinal Wiseman, who graciously consented that the Oblates of Mary Immaculate should found a mission and house of their society there.

Holy memories were attached to Kilburn. The stones were still "crying out from the wall," proclaiming the fact that in days gone by it had been the hallowed resort of souls who fled from the world's cares and dangers, to devote their lives to contemplation and prayer, and to the exercise of Christian hospitality towards the wayfarer and the needy. At Kilburn two great street-ways cross one another ; one bears the name of Abbey-road, and the other that of Priory-road. Half-a-dozen other places derive their titles from the old Priory of Kilburn. The Priory was not one of those Religious houses that were famous in England's history ; yet "it has left its footprints on the sands of time."

The story of how there came to be a Priory, takes us back to a royal and saintly home, the palace of St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland, and niece of St. Edward the Confessor. St. Margaret's life is drawing to its close. A great servant of God—Turgot, her Confessor—whom a non-catholic writer of distinction (Miss Strickland) calls "a great and good man," is at the bedside of the dying queen. To him she speaks in these words : "Farewell, for I shall not be here long ; you will stay some little time behind me. Two things I have to desire of you ; one is that so long as you live you remember my poor soul in your Masses and prayers ; the second is that you take the charge of my two children, Matilda and Edith. Teach them, above all things, to love and fear God, and if either of them should be permitted to attain the height of worldly grandeur, oh, then, in an especial manner, be unto them a father and a guide ; admonish, and if need be, reprove them, lest they should be swelled with the pride of momentary glory, and offend their creator, and forfeit eternal life. These things I beseech you promise here in the presence of God." The piety of Margaret of Scotland was inherited by her daughter Matilda, the "good Queen Maud," of England, from out whose holy household its fragrance spread to a lowly hermitage by a running brook, in the silent groves of Kilburn. Matilda was educated by the Nuns at Romsey, of which her aunt was Abbess. There she wished to spend all her days ; but like another Esther she was to ascend the throne

for the good of her people. We would fain linger on the details of her life, but the introduction of the name of Matilda, wife of Henry I., into our pages, is due only to its connection with the foundation of the Priory or Nunnery of Kilburn. Whilst taking part with her husband in the government of the State, she led the life of a saint. The companions of her devotions were her three maids of honour, Emma, Christina, and Gunilda. These holy virgins felt inspired to dedicate themselves to God in the religious state. The advice of the Abbot Herbert, of Westminster, was sought by them. At that time there lived in the woods of Kilburn a holy hermit, named Godwin, who wished before the close of his days to hand over his hermitage and its enclosure to the community of Westminster Abbey. The Abbot Herbert, judging the site of the hermitage of Kilburn to offer a suitable position for a Priory of Benedictine Nuns, presented it, on the part of his community, to the three devout ladies, the maids of honour of Queen Matilda, already spoken of. It was thus that Kilburn Priory was inaugurated in the year 1130. The conditions which were attached to the gift of the Abbot Herbert were, that the Nuns should pray for the soul of Edward the Confessor, and for the good estate of the Abbot and community of Westminster.

The hospitality of Kilburn Priory was exercised for four hundred years. It arose into existence in the days of the first Henry ; it disappeared in those of the last. But it left behind it a twilight of holy memories that lingered over the place through a night of centuries, until day—a day of faith—broke at last upon Kilburn, and to the olden Priory a new Priory succeeded. Before a permanent position had been secured, a temporary one had to be occupied for some years. The Oblates rented a house in Greville-road ; the best room therein was set apart for a chapel and there Mass was said on the Feast of the Purification 1865. At that time the Sunday congregation did not number more than a couple of dozen people, but gradually the grain of mustard seed began to grow and spread out its branches. The founding of new schools in Kilburn Park—where West Kilburn, equal to a great town, had suddenly sprung

up—was the first important development of the mission. Then houses were built with amazing rapidity on all sides of the humble Mass house,—the congregation outgrew its capacity and a suitable site had to be secured for a church, and a community house for the Fathers. A pathway through green fields had been converted into Quex Road, and there a plot of ground was purchased which had once been portion of the lands of Kilburn Priory. On this site was erected, from the designs of Edward Welby Pugin, a building of which the upper portion for many years served as a Church—the under portion as a residence for the community. The Priests at Kilburn in the sixties and seventies were Fathers Crawley and Arnoux. They did their duty as zealous and devoted missionaries, but in their reports of the good work accomplished they failed not to acknowledge the generous help of the religious people Providence had gathered around them. Among special benefactors they have recorded the names of Professor Barff, Mr. Herbert, R.A., the Stanfields, Mr. Anthony Biddulph, Mr. W. E. Slaughter, Lady Witham and family, Miss Hay, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Kenelm Digby, and many more. Father Arnoux was still Superior when the foundations were laid of the first portion of the permanent church—dedicated to the Sacred Heart. Cardinal Manning blessed the first stone. He also presided at the opening ceremonies on May 8, 1879. Father Cox had, by this time, become Superior. We have named a few only, who ought never to be forgotten, of those who in the beginning helped generously to build the new Church of the Sacred Heart. One other name deserves very special mention. Brother Patrick Dumigan, O.M.I., who died in February 1882, had laboured most devotedly for over four years in collecting for the building fund.

The church opened in 1879 served for the many years of the superiorship of Father Cox and Father Shinnors. Father Cox did a great deal of good work of many kinds in his day, and the elementary schools in Peel Road gave him his share of troubles in the building line.

Father Shinnors, who was Superior for many years previous to 1897, had to build new schools in Granville

Road, in the crowded quarter which was formerly Kilburn Park and Queen's Park. He was helped in his work by many parishioners and friends such as Messrs. de Ayala, Currie, Lyall, St. John, Slaughter, Shield, Hollingshead, Flanagan, and Corney.

In 1897 the new Superior, Father James O'Reilly, took in hands the work of completing the church. By collections, bazaars, and so forth, he raised a great deal of money. The foundation stone of the extension of the church was laid and blessed by Cardinal Vaughan on October 8, 1898. The work undertaken consisted of two bays of the nave and of the aisles, the large raised sanctuary, two side chapels, and the sacristy, as well as three confessionals added to the north side of the church. The architect was of course Mr. Peter Paul Pugin, who had been associated with his brother in making the original designs for church and house. Among the members of the local congregation present at the blessing of the foundation stone were many who were always foremost when good work was to be done in the parish. Several names that have already appeared we need not now repeat. But the Fathers attached to the Kilburn Mission are always bound to remember the generosity in these latter days of such friends as Colonel Suarez, Mr. Wehner, Mr. George Shield, Mr. Boland, Mr. Maslen, Dr. Smith, Mrs. John, Mrs. Rolph, Miss Floyd, Mrs. Fitzgibbon, Mrs. Burleigh, Mrs. Molyneux, Mrs. Thornton; and surely they are specially bound to remember in prayer the Bazaar workers, and the devoted men who went round collecting, Sunday after Sunday, for the completion of the beautiful and devotional Church they have given to God. Many special gifts were made to the church, as it approached completion, in addition to large money contributions coming from the same donors. Mr. A. S. Wehner supplied the magnificent high altar; Mr. de Ayala the altar rails and a stained glass window; Mr. Edgar Crowe four stained glass windows; Mr. H. C. John, the Indian carpet covering the sanctuary; Mr. Lyall the hanging Rood; Mrs. Rolph the Lady altar; Mrs. Hickling the Sacred Heart altar; Mrs. John the *Pieta* and two stained glass windows; Mrs. Ridpath the pulpit;

Miss John the statue and pedestal of Our Lady of Lourdes ; Mrs. Lees the statue and pedestal of the Sacred Heart, and a very beautiful embroidered canopy ; and Mr. Boland the fine electric light fittings throughout the church.

The completed church was blessed and opened on October 8, 1899, by Cardinal Vaughan, who assisted pontifically at High Mass. Bishop Brindle preached the sermon. There were present in the sanctuary Bishop Chisholm of Aberdeen, Mgr. Lennon (a benefactor of the Oblate Fathers), Father Benziger, O.C.D., now Bishop of Quilon, and Father Charles Collin, Rector of St. Joseph's College, Colombo, along with a great many other priests.

Ten years later, in June 1909, on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, the church was consecrated by Bishop Miller, O.M.I. All the debt on the church had been paid off by a bequest of Miss Floyd, who was a most generous benefactress of the Church of the Sacred Heart, having in all given or bequeathed £5,000 for church purposes. At the time of the consecration, the Superior was Father O'Rourke, who, in his term of office, worked very hard, carried through some very costly but necessary repairs and decorations, and procured a new organ, which cost over £1,000.

CHAPTER XXX.

CEYLON.

CEYLON, the Taprobane of Grecian and Roman history, is one of the loveliest and most fertile islands in the British empire. Its length is 266 miles, and its width 140 miles. In area it is nearly the size of Ireland. It presents an aspect of singular grandeur and beauty as it emerges from the sea, with its mountain ranges rising to the average height of the Pyrenees, and crowned with forests of perennial green, whilst its plains are clad to the edge of the beach with a carpet of sparkling verdure. It contains a variety of the richest productions of mother earth. The pearls found in the Gulf of Manaar, on the north-west coast, are counted among the most precious. The feathery tribes of its glorious woods and forests are unsurpassed by the bird-world of any other land, in sweetness of song, and in tint and glitter of plumage. But it is not to feast the eye and ear amidst the most delectable of nature's sights and sounds, that the youthful missionary leaves father and mother, and all things, to become an exile until death in some far-away land. His object is to gain souls to God. With such an object present to his thoughts, the mission field of Ceylon cannot fail to prove attractive. Ceylon has a great pagan history attached to its earliest ages. It is stated that the regal city of Anuradhapura, which was founded five centuries before Christ, occupied a site larger than that of modern London. But a bright Catholic page was to appear in the history of Ceylon. The neighbouring peninsula of Hindustan was traversed by the footsteps of an Apostle—an Apostle like one of the twelve—possessed of the gift of tongues and of the gift of miracles, the great St. Francis Xavier. The inhabitants of Ceylon sent messengers to the Saint, begging that he would visit and instruct them

in the Christian faith. In 1548 he set foot on the island, and the same marvels that had accompanied his missionary labours elsewhere, followed his preaching in Ceylon. The gloomy and idolatrous rites of Brahminism in the north, and of Buddhism in the south of the island, gave way to the teachings and the practices of the Christian faith. The blood of martyrs began soon to fertilize the vineyard. The glory of furnishing the first legion of martyrs for the faith in Ceylon was to belong to Jaffna, that part of the island which St. Francis had himself, in person, evangelized. Six hundred martyrs were put to death by the King of Jaffnapatam, for having embraced Christianity. Among those who perished thus gloriously was the king's own son. These events led to possession of the island being taken by the Portuguese. Alluding to the labours of the early Catholic missionaries in Jaffna peninsula, Sir Emerson Tennent says :—

“ The whole extent of the peninsula was brought by them under the authority of the Church. It was divided into parishes, each of which was provided with a chapel and school-house, and, where required, a glebe for the residence of the Priest. The ruins of these ecclesiastical edifices, even at the present day, attest the care and expenditure which must have been applied to their construction. In Jaffna itself they had a church and college of Jesuits at the west end of the town; a church and convent of Dominicans on the east, besides a convent of St. Francis. Between forty and fifty Priests resided then in Jaffna. In short, there is sufficient evidence extant connected with this province of Ceylon, to justify the assertion that within a very few years of its occupation by the Portuguese, almost the entire population of the Jaffna peninsula, including even the Brahmins themselves, had abjured idolatry and submitted to the ceremony of Baptism.”—*Christianity in Ceylon*, by Sir J. E. Tennent, ch. 2.

But a terrible persecution was at hand to test the sincerity of the conversions wrought on such a large scale among the Singhalese and Tamil populations of that island. The

Dutch became masters of Ceylon in 1658. The utter extirpation of Catholicity was one of their first projects. One of the means employed by them was to re-establish paganism. Dr. John Davy, brother to the philosopher, Sir Humphrey Davy, in his work *Travels in Ceylon*, page 308, tells us that shortly after the Dutch took possession of that island, they encouraged Wimaladarme, son of Raja Singhe, to send messengers to Siam for twelve Buddhist bonzes of the highest order. These came to Kandy and ordained twelve natives to the same order, and many to the lower order, and thus they restored the religion of Buddha for the purpose of extirpating Catholicity from the island. But at the same time that the Dutch encouraged the introduction of Pagan priests, they expelled Catholic Bishops and Priests from the island. Sir Emerson Tennent writes :—

“ The same fury against the Church of Rome continued at all times to inspire the policy of the Dutch in Ceylon. In 1658 a proclamation was issued, forbidding—on pain of death—the harbouring or concealing of a Roman Catholic Priest. In 1715 a proclamation was issued, forbidding public assemblies or private conventicles of the Roman Catholics, under heavy fines. Notwithstanding every persecution however, the Roman Catholic religion retained its influence and was adhered to by large bodies of the natives, both Singhalese and Tamils, whom neither corruption nor coercion could induce to abjure it. No native could aspire to the rank of Modliar, or be permitted to farm land or hold office under government, unless he became a protestant. Roman Catholic marriages were heavily taxed. Their celebration by a Roman Catholic Priest was at last absolutely prohibited and declared void. Their burial was prohibited in cemeteries of their own, and extravagant fees were exacted on their interment in those attached to the protestant churches. Roman Catholics were declared equally with heathens to be ineligible to office. Freedom was conferred upon all children born of slaves who were protestants, whilst those of Catholic parents were condemned to perpetual servitude. In the peninsula of Jaffna

they took possession of the Roman Catholic churches."—*Christianity in Ceylon*, page 53.

For one hundred and fifty years this persecution was carried on relentlessly. Sir Emerson Tennent speaks thus of the devoted Priests during this period :—

“ From Kandy, where they had been alternately invited and proscribed by the kings, the Roman Catholic Priests made their way into the low country, visiting in secret their scattered flocks, in spite of the plakats and prohibitions of the Government. Among the most distinguished of those preachers was Joseph Vaz, of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, at Goa, whose adventurous journeys and imprisonments, and extraordinary zeal, have obtained for his memory among the Roman Catholics of Ceylon, a veneration little short of that accorded to St. Francis Xavier in India. He prosecuted his labours with such success, that in an incredibly short time he had re-established the Catholic communion in its former strongholds in Jaffna and Manaar, extended its influence in the maritime provinces, and added to the Church upwards of thirty thousand converts from the heathen. He died at Kandy in 1711.”

“ When the Kandyan territories submitted to the British Crown, a colony of Roman Catholics were discovered in their mountain fastnesses at Wahacotta, still retaining their attachment to the christian name and ordinances, although they were hemmed in on all sides by Buddhists, and had not seen the face of a Priest for nearly three quarters of a century. Their minister, who was unordained, was called a Sacristan. They had one copy of the New Testament in Singhalese, translated by a Roman Catholic Priest. They prayed before a Crucifix, honoured the Blessed Virgin, and were married and buried according to the forms of the Roman Catholic Church.”

The English took possession of the Ceylonese coasts in 1796, and their claim to hold the island was recognized by the Treaty of Amiens in 1802. About the time when

the native Catholics of Ceylon were thus set free from the galling yoke of Dutch persecution, events were taking place in Europe of evil import for the cause of religion. The great Revolution was at the height of its terrible career. Portugal and her dependencies fell under the influence of the revolutionary epidemic. The reins of power in that country had passed into the hands of men who, though nominally Catholic, were hostile to the interests of religion. The old missionary spirit that used to send forth the Xaviers and the Vazes had passed away. The Church in Portugal, scarcely able to supply its own altars with Priests, owing to the persecution, could do little or nothing to provide a succession of clergy for the missions it had created. Ceylon was under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa, a Portugese settlement; but Goa was smitten, like the mother country, by the revolutionary plague. Seminaries were closed, religious orders were dispersed, and vocations to the priesthood had become rare, and there were not sufficient means of properly educating such as did present themselves. From such causes large gaps were created yearly in the ranks of the clergy. Great numbers of the Christian villages of the island were deprived of spiritual succour. Such being the case, the Holy See took Ceylon under its own immediate jurisdiction. In 1834 it was detached from the jurisdiction of Goa, and created into an Apostolic Vicariate by Gregory XVI. In 1845 the island was divided into two vicariates—Colombo in the south, and Jaffna in the north. Mgr. Bettachini was appointed Vicar-Apostolic of Jaffna. This zealous prelate, who had been for some time coadjutor to the Vicar-Apostolic of Colombo, and who knew well the wants of the island, felt the importance of calling to his aid some society of missionary Priests who, walking in the footsteps of the old apostles of Ceylon, would co-operate with him in seeking to restore the vicariate under his care to its former Catholic life. He fixed his choice on the Oblates of Mary. Monseigneur de Mazenod, whom he visited in 1847 at Marseilles, entered into all his views, and it was agreed between both prelates that a foundation of the Oblates of Mary in Jaffna was to take place forthwith.

Father Semeria, who had laboured much with Father Albini in Corsica, and amongst the Italians of Marseilles, was appointed Superior of the missionaries going to Ceylon. A saint, a scholar, an apostle, he was admirably fitted for the great work which awaited him. At the time of the arrival of the Oblates, there were only eight Priests in the vicariate of Jaffna, a district nearly one-third the size of Ireland. There were then about fifty thousand native Catholics in that district ; some inhabited the interior of the country, others lived along the sea shore and in the islands which lie scattered in the bordering seas. On his arrival in Jaffna, Father Semeria was named Vicar-General by Mgr. Bettachini. This position opened up a large field for his administrative capabilities and his missionary zeal.

Missionary life in Ceylon makes large demands on one's physical powers of endurance, and still larger upon one's spirit of devotedness and self-denial. At a distance of forty or fifty miles is situated a village, inhabited by some one or two hundred native christians. No direct road leads to the spot, and its position is not shown upon any map. The missionary Father has received, with most willing heart, his obedience to visit that village. A sea of jungle lies between him and the place he wishes to reach. His journeys must necessarily be slow ; a broiling sun and a cloudless sky are overhead. His effects are being carried in a waggon drawn by oxen, or are borne on the shoulders of his Coolie companions, who perhaps may desert him in the wilderness. He advances into the jungle for a day's march. The shadows of evening are thickening and he halts for the night. The paneke, or rice-cake, forms his scant supper ; with difficulty he can find wherewith to slake his thirst, as running water is a scarcity, and that which he is often compelled to drink, is tepid and of bad odour. Having paid his homage to God, and recommended himself to the divine protection for the night, he wraps himself in his rug, and stretches his weary limbs on the bare ground. The howling of wild beasts disturbs his early slumber ; the trumpeting of elephants, and the roaring of leopards, and the chattering of strange birds of the night, produce a frightful discord to which he becomes accustomed

in time. But more harassing than these sounds are the buzzings and the bitings of the mosquitoes, the great pest of tropical climes. Before dawn the missionary resumes his journey ; towards noon he has to seek shelter somewhere from the great heats. Perhaps at night he discovers that he had been going astray all the day long, and that he has to retrace his steps over the same dreary ground. At last he reaches the village of his search ; he is well received. He repairs to the little hut chapel where for a week or two, he preaches, catechises, offers the Holy Sacrifice, administers the sacraments, baptizes and marries, instructs such pagans as desire to become Christians, visits the sick, and gives the last sacraments to the dying. In this way he proceeds from village to village. Six months may elapse in a life of this kind before the missionary Father finds his way back to the humble community abode, from which he had gone forth on his message of charitable zeal. Such have been the good-shepherd journeys in Ceylon of a Semeria, a Bonjean, a Melizan, and dozens of other missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

The distinguished traveller, Sir Samuel Baker says :—

“ Although Protestant missionaries are rare in the jungles of the interior, still, in spots where it might be least expected, may be seen the humble mud hut, surmounted by a cross, the certain trace of some persevering Priest of the Roman faith.”

In 1854 the district of Jaffna was visited by a double scourge—cholera and small-pox. Out of the six thousand Catholics of which the mission of the town of Jaffna was composed, one thousand fell victims to the plague. Father Lacombe, a devoted young missionary, was carried off by the epidemic, a martyr to his priestly duty. The heart of the saintly Father Semeria was plunged in deep affliction. His labours among the cholera and small-pox smitten were incessant. To Christians and pagans alike he was Father and friend and nurse. The year 1855 opened without any cessation of the double scourge. Early in that year a letter reached Father Semeria from the venerable Founder,

Monseigneur de Mazenod, announcing the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and adding :—

“ Let us give thanks to God that we, by our name, have already proclaimed this truth.”

The reception of the news made Father Semeria order a Triduum of prayers in honour of the Immaculate Conception to obtain the cessation of the plague. He invited the Fathers of the neighbouring missions to come to Jaffna, and take part in this devout celebration. During three days, violence was offered to heaven by Priests and people praying together. Great crowds flocked to all the devotions of the Triduum ; the voices of those who were weeping and sighing and petitioning for mercy, were loud in the church from morning till night. The confessionals were besieged by eager multitudes, and very many approached the Eucharistic table. On each of the three days a procession, in which was borne with great solemnity a statue of Mary the Immaculate, issued from the church and circulated through the streets of the town, singing hymns and litanies, and reciting prayers for forgiveness. Arches of flowers were erected at the entrances to the chief thoroughfares, flags and festoons graced the fronts of several houses. Many Protestants, willing to show their sympathy with their Catholic fellow-townsmen, decorated their house-fronts in the streets through which the statue of Mary Immaculate was being carried. No cessation or lessening of the evil took place during the three days from the commencement to the completion of the Triduum. On the fourth morning the Triduum closed. Quickly the news spread that there had been no new cases of cholera in the previous night, no death that morning, and that all who had been attacked had recovered and were out of danger. That day forty patients came out from the small-pox hospital cured. The anger of God was appeased, and the power of prayer, through the intercession of Mary the Immaculate, was established. Many conversions of Pagans and Protestants were the result of an event which seemed nothing short of a miracle.

In the year 1856 Mgr. Bettachini made successful

application to the Holy See for the appointment of Father Semeria as his coadjutor. On the 20th of August of the same year the latter was consecrated Bishop at Marseilles. Mgr. Bettachini died in 1857, when the full charge of the Vicariate of Jaffna passed into the hands of the Oblates of Mary.

Bishop Semeria was a model of the true Bishop and the perfect Religious. To the last he was as exact as a novice in all the exercises of the community.

Shortly after the responsibilities of the diocese of Jaffna had devolved upon him, we find him setting forth, in company with a body of Oblate missionaries, to conduct missions in due form in the chief centres of Christian population in his immense diocese. Missions were given in the islands of Kaitz and Manaar, in Mantotte, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Chilaw, Trincomalee, and several other districts.

The exercises of the mission of Trincomalee opened in May 1858. During this mission, which Bishop Semeria conducted in person, took place the religious profession of a new Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Father Bonjean—who, though still in the flower of his manhood, had been already for ten years labouring as a missionary in India. The same divine hand which gave to the Oblates of Canada a missionary, Alexander Taché, who was to become an apostle-Bishop of their society amidst the snows of the Arctic circle, now leads to their ranks one who will become an Oblate Bishop and an apostle amidst the tropical regions of the South. Father Bonjean himself has described a scene of the Mission of 1858. He says :—

“ This mission was held in the handsome and spacious church of Trincomalee. This church is a monument of the generous piety of the Irish Catholic soldiers of the 37th regiment. The festival of Corpus Christi was at hand. Permission was obtained from the government authorities to have the procession pass through the streets of the town, and the soldiers were allowed to take part in it. The town was richly decked in holiday garb ; triumphal arches were erected at different points along the route of the procession ; beautiful altars of repose were placed at suitable distances,

and they were decorated with European and Indian skill. Never had Trincomalee been the scene of such solemnity. At last the procession entered the church. At the moment the Blessed Sacrament crossed the threshold, the great crowd, which was chiefly composed of native Christians, and which had till then been moving along in silent worship, seemed suddenly to be smitten by some common emotion of fervour which they could not control. With united voice they broke out into cries of contrition and repentance. 'Jesus have pity on us! Jesus pardon us!' was the cry of every lip. When the procession entered the church, I took my place in the pulpit, but my voice was drowned by the loud weeping and sobbings of the penitent crowd. I too, in turn, was overtaken by the common emotion, and speech failed me. Coming down from the pulpit, I hastened to prostrate myself at the feet of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist, in joint worship with that adoring congregation. The success of the mission was secured from that day."

Accompanied by his devoted brother Oblate missionaries, Bishop Semeria visited also the other important Christian stations of his vast vicariate. In his report to the General Chapter of the Oblates in 1861, we find it stated that five thousand adult pagans, or non-catholics, had, within the previous five years, been admitted to Baptism in the vicariate of Jaffna.

Among the consoling events of the early years in Ceylon is to be numbered the conversion of eight Sinhalese prisoners in Kandy, shortly before their execution for murder. Father Pulicani and Father Duffo were those who, in spite of many obstacles, persevered in their instructions and prayers, until they reconciled those poor men with their Maker, and made them Christians.

A notorious brigand and assassin named Sardiel, was also converted by Father Duffo, who attended him on the morning of his execution, May 7, 1864.

In his own lifetime, Bishop Semeria (helped by those great societies of the Propagation of the Faith and the Holy Childhood) had the happiness of seeing Nuns in Ceylon, the Sisters of the Holy Family, whose society is affiliated

to the Oblates. These Nuns, when established in Jaffna, opened there a noviciate for native Nuns of St. Peter, who now form a large community. The Brothers of St. Joseph, founded by Father Bonjean, are another very important religious community.

In 1867 Bishop Semeria and Father Bonjean came to Europe to take part in a General Chapter. Father Bonjean visited England and Ireland on the occasion. His Bishop and he were preparing to return to Jaffna, when the Bishop fell ill at Marseilles, and died there on 23 January 1868. At Tours on August 24, 1868, Father Bonjean was consecrated Bishop by Archbishop Guibert. Two months later he was in Jaffna as the successor of Bishop Semeria. To his grief, he had brought back with him only one new missionary, Father Melizan. The new Vicar Apostolic was an indefatigable worker. *Impendam et superimpendar* was the motto which he chose for his episcopal seal. In 1870 this most ardent of Bishops distinguished himself in the discussions of the Vatican Council, where he was able to speak with authority about the Eastern peoples, their ideas, and their needs.

About the year 1880, Bishop Bonjean was able to report in his Vicariate 70,000 Catholics, 263 churches or chapels of some sort, the beginnings of a seminary, and a Catholic newspaper, published in English and Tamil. Between 1850 and 1880, one hundred schools and five orphanages were opened in the same Vicariate. In 1880 there were forty Oblate Fathers, and five convents of nuns, in the Jaffna vicariate. There remained, of course, a great deal to be done. The pagans of the Vicariate numbered 700,000.

In 1883 the Holy See arranged a new sub-division of work in the island. Bishop Pagnani, of the Silvestrine Benedictines, became Vicar Apostolic of Kandy (Central Province), Bishop Bonjean of Colombo, and Father Melizan was consecrated Bishop as Vicar Apostolic of Jaffna. In 1886 a further change was made, the hierarchy being established in India and Ceylon, and the old Portuguese "royal patronage" being at last abolished. The Bishops in Kandy and Jaffna from the beginning of 1887 have taken their titles from those towns. Dr. Bonjean became the first Arch-

bishop of Colombo. The old Goa "patronage" was a cross to him for a great part of his life, for it was the cause of schisms in various parts of the island. His continuous and patient labours, along with those of the other Bishops and priests, at length brought back to Mother Church the deluded native Christians.

In 1893 a further diocesan division was made by authority of the Holy See. The Jesuit Fathers took charge of a new diocese of Galle, in the south, separated from the diocese of Colombo, and of Trincomalee in the north-east, cut off from Jaffna, and of a Papal Seminary for native clergy at Kandy.

In 1910 Mr. de Sampayo, K.C. (art. *Ceylon*, Catholic Encyclopaedia) estimated the number of Catholics in the island at 300,000; and he gave the following statistics for 1905: churches or chapels, 592; schools, 570; seminaries, 5 (with 174 students, of whom 88 were in the Papal Seminary); European secular priests, 133; native priests, 43; religious priests, 288; nuns (Holy Family, Good Shepherd, Missionaries of Mary, Little Sisters of the Poor, Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary), 430 in various educational and charitable institutions.

From the Government census of 1911 we take the following figures: population of Ceylon, 4,110,367; Roman Catholics, 339,300, there being of these 242,179 in the metropolitan diocese of Colombo, that is, the Western and North-western civil provinces. The total population of the same provinces is 1,542,957. The Colombo diocesan statistics for 1912 show that in the 58 parishes or missions there were 478 schools with 44,617 pupils (37,403 being Catholics). St. Joseph's College, Colombo, had 1,068 pupils (654 being Catholics). In the same year (ended August 31, 1912) there were registered in the diocese the baptisms of 7,054 children of Catholic parents, and of 22 children of Protestant parents, as well as 499 children of pagan parents. The baptisms (or conditional baptisms) of adults were, of converts from paganism, 1,661, from heresy, 163. 2,061 marriages were solemnised. 8,657 persons were confirmed, and the number of communions was 1,324,343. As may be seen, the great bulk of the

Catholic population is in the west and north-west of the island, Colombo city itself having over 43,000, out of a total population of over 213,000.

In the diocese of Jaffna (in its reduced dimensions), there are in the thirty quasi-parishes 51,000 Catholics. The adults received into the Church there in 1912 were 254 pagans and 60 non-Catholic Christians. The other dioceses have (according to our latest information) Kandy, 28,000 Catholics, Trincomalee, 8,500, and Galle, 7,900. The number of priests in Ceylon seems to be 266. Of these 190 are in the dioceses of Colombo and Jaffna, 170 being Oblates. There are 457 Nuns in Ceylon, all but forty being in Colombo and Jaffna, the oldest dioceses. The number of members of religious Brotherhoods is 153 (115 in Colombo and Jaffna).

CHAPTER XXXI.

NATAL.

THE ecclesiastical divisions of South Africa are very modern. In 1820 Bishop Slater, O.S.B., was Vicar Apostolic of Mauritius and the Cape of Good Hope, and the English Bishop Poynter was interesting himself in the few hundred Catholics at the Cape. In 1837 the Cape of Good Hope was made a separate Vicariate, under Bishop Griffith, O.P. In 1847 two Vicariates were formed, Bishop Devereux being consecrated as first Vicar Apostolic of the Eastern, and Bishop Griffith remaining in the Western.

But still further division was desired. The Holy See sought for some religious order to undertake work in Natal. The Prefect of Propaganda made appeal to the Bishop of Marseilles, though his little society had been for less than a quarter of a century canonically approved. Mgr. de Mazenod felt much embarrassed. The ranks of his missionaries had been thinned by the sending to the heroic work in Canada and Oregon, Red River, and Ceylon of those whom it was hard to spare. The Founder prayed, and thought, and consulted, and he said, "It would seem to be a call from God; we must accept." The Vicariate of Natal was separated from the Eastern Vicariate by a decree of 15 November 1850. In 1852 Bishop Allard, O.M.I., the first Vicar Apostolic, landed at Port Natal or Durban with five other Oblates. Until then there had been no resident priest in Natal. The Catholics of Durban (200) and of Pietermaritzburg (300), being mostly Irish, must have been pleased that one priest sent to visit them by Bishop Devereux bore the name of Father Murphy. But Father Sabon, O.M.I., who settled in Durban, though French,

became quite a *ῥαῖσαρτ ἂ ῥῦμ*. He began by building a thatched chapel, with three rooms at the back, one of which was reserved for the Bishop when in Durban.

Father Sabon devoted himself not only to the whites, but to the coolies from India, of whom many were Catholics. He studied their Tamil tongue. He boarded the emigrant ships from India, especially if they brought cholera cases, and he followed on foot up hill and down dale the poor coolie labourers. He is still remembered and venerated in Durban, where Catholicity is now in quite a different position from that which it occupied in his pioneer days.

At Pietermaritzburg, about fifty miles inland, the principal worker in the early days was Father Barret, whose golden jubilee was much honoured by the people not long before his death in January 1911.

The original Vicariate of Natal included those countries which, at various dates, have become the Vicariates of the Transvaal, Orangia (with the Kimberley Diamond Fields), and Basutoland. The evangelizing of the heathen natives was the work of predilection of the first Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Allard. He himself and Fathers Gerard, Le Bihan, and Bompert learned the Kafir language, and penetrated into the interior of Natal, where they established a humble central mission station.

Far away amidst the fastnesses of the Kafir hills, skilled labour was not to be procured. The Bishop, Fathers Gerard and Bihan, and the catechist Brother Bernard, became the architects, masons, carpenters, and decorators of the new sanctuary. The timber used was hewn by their own hands, in a forest which lay at a distance of six miles, and was borne on their shoulders to the site of the projected building. After some months of ceaseless labour on their part, their little church was ready for the opening ceremony, which took place on Sunday, 17 July 1859, the feast of the Most Holy Redeemer. Missionary excursions among the Kafir tribes were made at frequent intervals by the Fathers from the central station thus created. Travelling in South Africa, whilst presenting oftentimes gorgeous and stupendous sights to the eye, offers many a difficult and dangerous pathway to the footsteps of him who climbs its wall-like

mountains, or descends into its awe-inspiring kloofs, or seeks to ford its treacherous rivers.

If ever missionary work demanded faith and resignation, it was that which Monseigneur Allard and his companions undertook in behalf of the Kafir tribes of Natal. No numerous conversions consoled the first labours of the Oblate missionaries in that country. The Kafirs of Natal proper were of the Zulu race. Owing to intercourse with Europeans they were impregnated with many of the vices of civilized countries, along with their own. Acting on the advice of Monseigneur de Mazenod, Monseigneur Allard determined to transfer his own labours, and those of his Kafir missionaries, to another pagan region of his vicariate—Basutoland. Upon the plateaux and on the sides of the Mulati mountains—a continuation of the chain of the Drakenberg—dwelt the tribes of the Basutos, over which reigned the famous old warrior, King Moshesh, who bore the title of the “Lion of the Mountains,” owing to the terror which his name inspired among the inhabitants of bordering regions. Monseigneur Allard, accompanied by Father Gerard, and a catechist—Brother Bernard—left Pietermaritzburg 19 August 1862, for Basutoland. The journey, which was performed on foot, was a long and wearisome one. It occupied fifty days. Monseigneur Allard’s interview with Moshesh ended by his obtaining all that he demanded. A site for the new mission was selected in a glen at the foot of the great rock on which the king’s kraal was situated. The king wished the Fathers to fix their residence not far from his own, in order that he might have an opportunity of holding frequent intercourse with them. The old king, alas ! was to die a pagan ; nevertheless, his friendly patronage was an important aid in the efforts the Fathers were making for the conversion of the Basuto nation.

The site for the mission appointed by Moshesh, and accepted gratefully by Monseigneur Allard, was one of singular beauty. It lay at a height of six thousand feet above the level of the sea. A circle of terraced hills of great elevation enclosed it. Strange enough, Monseigneur Allard discovered an Irish family residing on the king’s

mountain, who were overjoyed at meeting his lordship, and who were of much service to him in his transactions with the king.

Motsi-wa-Ma-Jesus (Village of the Mother of Jesus, now called Roma) was the name which he gave to the site of the new mission, where he hoped one day to see a Christian village spring up. This hope was destined to be realised, to the great consolation of the devoted Bishop. On the 1st November 1863, the mission was formally opened in presence of the king, of several of his sons, and of many of the principal chieftains.

The establishing of a community of the nuns of the Holy Family (of Bordeaux) at the village of Motsi-wa-Ma-Jesus, was an object on which the heart of Monseigneur Allard was now firmly set. He applied for a community of Sisters of that society, but two years had to elapse before the convent could be established. Meanwhile the Fathers were occupied in preparing a catechism in the Sesuto language, and in visiting the surrounding tribes in their kraals. Two branch missions were established, one called St. Michael's, and the other placed under the protection of St. Joseph. The work of conversion began now steadily to make progress, though it met with great obstacles from the practice of polygamy among all the Kafir tribes. Monseigneur Allard was still in Basutoland when the community of Nuns arrived from Bordeaux at Pietermaritzburg, under the care of Fathers Hidien and Barthelemy. The self-sacrifice displayed by these devoted ladies in leaving their homes in France, to spend the rest of their days among the poor Kafir tribes of Basutoland, made a profound impression on Protestants as well as Catholics at Pietermaritzburg. After a sojourn of some months in this latter place, all was at last in readiness for their long and difficult journey to the mountains of the Basutos. The caravan was to be composed of Monseigneur Allard, Fathers Barthelemy and Le Bihan, a lay-brother catechist, and six Sisters of the Holy Family. Five Kafirs were employed to conduct the waggons. These waggons were like houses on wheels ; each measured fifteen feet in length by six in width. They were supplied with a tilt or

awning. They had no springs. Fourteen oxen were yoked to each in spans of two. On the morning of 18 February 1866, the travelling party commenced their journey to Basutoland. It was to occupy, owing to divers mishaps and difficulties of travel, sixty days. They met several Irish Catholic families along their way in the early part of their journey, who were moved in many instances to tears at sight of the devotedness of the good Sisters. The foot of the Drakensberg having been reached, to an inexperienced eye further progress must have appeared impossible. Through the passes of these wall-like mountains have they to wind their zig-zag way, sometimes on the edge of precipices of awe-inspiring depth, and sometimes through gloomy gorges overhung with rocks that seem ready to fall upon them. Emerging from Van Renen's Pass, they have before them the interminable plains of the Orange Free State. They advance for days amidst a death-like stillness, without meeting a human habitation or encountering a fellow-being.

At last they arrived on the banks of the Wilgebach, in crossing which they met with a serious mishap ; one of the waggons was upset in the middle of the river, which fortunately was not deep at the time. All had to be unloaded and unpacked to prevent injury to the different objects that had been immersed in the river. On the 12th of March they were gladdened by the sight of clumps of blue gum trees, the certain sign that they were approaching a civilized settlement. Harrismith, in the Orange Free State (in which in 1913 the Sisters of Mercy from England are founding a convent, at the request of Bishop Gaughren) was the town to which they were drawing nigh. There they learned they had got half-way upon their journey. At last they came in sight of Basutoland, and the hearts of the devout Sisters were filled with deep emotion as they beheld the goal of their pilgrimage lying before them in the distance. They reached the territory of Molapo, one of the sons of Moshesh, and they learnt that the king was then residing there. Monseigneur Allard lost no time in going forward to pay his respects to Moshesh, who was greatly pleased to hear of the safe arrival of the Nuns.

He promised to visit them in their encampment. He arrived the next day, accompanied by Molapo his son, and forty chieftains, to welcome them to his States. The caravan of pious pilgrims continued to advance through the territory of Basutoland until they reached, on Holy-Thursday, April 14, the banks of the Caledon, the chief river of that country. Here their progress was arrested by the floods in that river. Two days' journey from the opposite bank of the Caledon would take them to Motsi-wa-ma-Jesus, their destination, but they had to wait patiently till a raft of some kind was constructed to transport them across the river. Ten days were spent in the passage of the Caledon.

Father Gerard, at the head of fifteen hundred Kafirs, some being converts to Christianity, and others in the habit of attending the services of the church, went forth a day's journey to meet the caravan. When it appeared in sight, they formed themselves into processional order, and advanced towards the Bishop and the nuns, chanting hymns in their own tongue which Fathers Gerard and Hidien had trained them to sing. It was a solemn and touching scene. On the sixty-fourth day of their journey, the pious Sisterhood arrived at the "Village of the Mother of God" in Basutoland. On hearing of their arrival, Moshesh sent an invitation to them to visit his royal Kraal on the heights of Thaba Bosigo. They had already forwarded to him a present which he valued very much—a full uniform suit of a Field Marshal of France. He received them with great distinction. They were accompanied by the Bishop and the Fathers. The king, to his evident gratification, appeared in the costume of a French field officer. Practical work in behalf of the poor natives began, on the part of the good Sisters, from the day of their arrival; the catechumenate, the orphanage and the school were the agencies which they set to work for the rescuing of these poor idolaters, to benefit whom they had left behind them all that they had held dear in the home and in the land of their childhood. The venerable Bishop, the Fathers, and the Nuns had before them years of labour, to be rewarded only in heaven. Their consolations were like

well-springs in wildernesses, very real and very great when found, but requiring long patience and perseverance in seeking. Individual conversions rewarded the zeal of the missionaries in Basutoland.

Nthlopo, a chieftain of considerable influence, and a leading *Pakati* or councillor of King Moshesh, who had been following for some time the services of the church of Motsi-wa-ma-Jesus, declared at last his belief in the Catholic religion, and expressed a wish to be baptized. The old king applauded much the decision of his councillor, though he had not the courage to follow his example. Monseigneur Allard thought it desirable to have the ceremony of Nthlopo's Baptism performed publicly, and with all the prescribed solemnity. The ceremony took place in presence of the king and of about a thousand of his people. The neophyte took the name of Joseph-Mary. With the gift of faith he received the gift of piety. He delighted in talking of God and of holy things, and if the conversation glided into other channels, he would quickly bring it back again to some subject of piety. God did not permit him to lose the grace of his Baptism. A few days after he had been baptized he was seized with his death illness. The edification which he gave to all who approached him on his death-bed was so great, that the Pagans in witnessing it exclaimed, "It is no longer Nthlopo that we behold, but the Christian Joseph-Mary." His funeral service was performed with great solemnity. Father Gerard preached. The king and several of his chieftains were present. They were much impressed by the honour shown to the remains of her departed children by the Catholic Church. The king addressed the crowd, advising them to listen to the instructions of the Fathers, whose teachings, he said, were true.

The terrors of war were not wanting to the early trials of the Oblate missions among the Basutos. A few months after the Nuns had established themselves in Basutoland, an army of Boers attacked the mountain strongholds of Moshesh. Monseigneur Allard thought it most prudent to provide for the safety of the Sisters by flight, to hiding places in the rocks. He took charge of them himself. After

they had been some time in concealment, a troop of mounted Boers were seen riding towards them. Happily they came to give the assurance that the Mission would not be molested. Nevertheless, the position of the Fathers and Sisters was a dangerous one. Father Gerard found himself one day in a jungle where the Boers imagined some Kafirs were then concealed, and into which they discharged volley after volley. Bullets were flying around him like hail-stones, and one of them struck his office book. He escaped untouched. Great were the miseries of the wretched Basuto population amidst all these war troubles. They came in crowds to the Mission to seek food and shelter, and to have their wounds cared for. Several conversions resulted from those afflictions, during which many poor Pagans had an opportunity of experiencing the solace which Christian charity can communicate in hours of supreme distress.

The lives of the holy Nuns who took up their abode amidst the tribes that wander through the mountain gorges of Basutoland, were sure to tell with attractive power upon certain chosen souls from out the womanhood of those regions. Kafir maidens, devout converts from Paganism, began after a period to show signs of a religious vocation. To meet their holy aspirations a branch convent for native nuns was founded in Basutoland, on a plan similar to that which had already been adopted in Ceylon, and with the same consoling results.

We have brought our narrative to the date 1874, when the venerable Bishop Allard resigned his pastoral charge, and was succeeded by Bishop Jolivet. At that time the various countries of which the Natal vicariate was composed were coming prominently to the front. Griqualand West (or the Diamond Fields), the Orange Free State, Transvaal, together with Natal proper and Basutoland, all made demands upon the administrative and missionary capabilities of the new Bishop. Fortunately the zeal, energy and experience of Bishop Jolivet fitted him to meet those demands. In a few years there were seen, in each of the countries just named, proofs of his practical and creative zeal in churches, schools, colleges and convents.

It was whilst Bishop Jolivet was immersed in the anxieties and labours connected with all these great undertakings, that the fury of war swept over different points of his diocese, and marred many of his zealous projects. Several Oblate Fathers became chaplains to the troops in the field. Father Walsh was shut up in Eshowe during the siege of that place. Father Baudry was present as army chaplain during the Battle of Ulundi. The war with the Zulus was followed by that with the Boers (1880-81). For a while the gravest fears were entertained for the life of the devoted Bishop. He was taken prisoner by the Boers at Potchefstroom, and for several days nothing was heard of him. Fortunately he met with kind treatment on the part of his captors, and after some formalities was restored to his liberty. A false report was spread, and believed in for a while, that Father Walsh was shot at Lydenburg, where he was acting as Chaplain. His Lordship received this news from Sir T. Shepstone, who in communicating it spoke in terms of highest praise of Father Walsh's devotedness and courage during the war. The Bishop remained under the grief of this supposed loss for some days until the news of Father Walsh's safety reached him. At Pretoria the convent, which was the largest building in the town, was turned into a fortress. The poor nuns and their boarders had to shelter themselves during the siege of the town in a small wing of the building. The Superioress, who was sister of Bishop Jolivet, was taken ill during the siege and died; her death was accelerated, no doubt, by grief and anxiety. The public authorities and the Protestant Bishop of Pretoria were present at her funeral. She and her community were held in highest respect by all classes in Pretoria—Catholics and Protestants alike—and the first families in the place confided their children to the care of the Sisters, who were ladies of high education and refinement. The community of Pretoria was a foundation from the Loreto convent at Navan, an establishment which ranks very high as an educational institution.

It was in the midst of troubles and difficulties of a public and personal nature, that the Bishop brought to completion several most important undertakings. Foremost among

these undertakings was the erection of three spacious and beautiful churches, one at Durban, one at Kimberley, and the third at Bloemfontein. Besides the convent at Pretoria, he erected noble conventual establishments at Pietermaritzburg, at Durban, and at Bloemfontein, in which the Sisters of the Holy Family communicate to numerous pupils, children of the principal colonists, the benefits of their admirable system of education. He also erected a college at Pietermaritzburg. But the good shepherd did not forget the poor wandering sheep of his fold who dwelt in their Kafir huts, far away in the Basuto mountains.

In his zeal for the conversion of the Basutos, he resolved to create a new mission at a distant point of Basutoland, where a single Christian did not then exist. Molapo, the son of Moshesh, in whose country the new mission was to be founded, had already given his consent to that effect. Father Gerard, the veteran missionary, was placed at the head of this new undertaking. The mission, which was to be called St. Monica's, was situated sixty miles from Motsiwa-ma-Jesus. The Bishop was to open the new mission in person. It was arranged that a large body of converted Basutos, conducted by the Fathers and Sisters, should form a pilgrimage to St. Monica's for the opening of the new mission. It was a strange sight for the natives of the place to behold the approaching procession of the pilgrims—Basutos, like themselves—advancing towards the newly-erected chapel, with the cross borne in front, and beautiful banners floating in the air, whilst hymns in their own language were being sweetly and piously sung by the united voices of many. Pontifical High Mass was celebrated in their presence, with all solemnity. The devotion of the neophyte Basutos during the Mass was surprising. During the week which the pilgrims spent at St. Monica's, they had frequent opportunities of conversing with their pagan countrymen on their happiness and privilege in being Christians. We shall be prepared to hear of great results following, at no distant day, from a mission inaugurated under circumstances so full of promise. The Bishop also established some missionary stations among the Kafirs

of Natal proper, which are being served periodically by Oblate missionaries from Pietermaritzburg and Durban. Before concluding this chapter on the Natal Vicariate, we would record a fact of historic interest.

One Sunday morning in May 1879, the congregation in the church of Pietermaritzburg was edified by the piety of a youth of princely bearing, who knelt at a priedieu placed within the sanctuary rails. Fervent was his prayer, and simple was his piety. He was the young "Prince Imperial" of France, in whom was the warm catholicity of France and Spain combined. After Mass, he mixed with the congregation as one of themselves, and, unattended, directed his steps to his lodging in Government House.

Into that same church, before another Sunday, the lifeless form of the young prince, slain by Zulu hands, was borne amidst the sobbings of a multitude. Even veteran warriors wept around that youthful bier, and all ranks and classes and creeds of Pietermaritzburg became, for the time, like one family, bewailing a great common sorrow. And near that altar, and on that spot where he knelt but a few days before in prayer, he lay now in death. There knelt around the body Oblate Priests and Sisters of the Holy Family. Moved by devout impulse, the Superioress placed her own scapular on his neck, which holy badge descended with him into the grave.

Some months go by, and into that same church of Pietermaritzburg comes an Imperial stranger, clad in garb of deepest mourning, and grief-stricken in every line of her features; queenly and courtly is she in mien and manner. She kneels—a mother is praying for her only son, for him whom she had hoped to see holding the sceptre of France. Rising, she whispered to the devout Superioress, "Reverend Mother, lead me to the place where my son knelt in prayer." Arriving there she said aloud, "And this is the spot where my son, my Louis, addressed his prayers to God before going forth to meet his death." There she prostrated herself anew, and wept and prayed for a considerable time. Rising again from her kneeling posture, she begged the Superioress to come and tell her such edifying incidents as she might

be acquainted with, concerning the last days of the young Prince. When the Superioress mentioned placing her own scapular around the neck of the departed Prince as he lay in his coffin, the Empress exclaimed, in tones of grateful emotion, " You did that for my son ! May God bless you ! " More precious to the glance of faith of that bereaved mother and Empress was that religious emblem than all those badges—the gifts of his Imperial father and of Kings and Emperors—which used to sparkle on his young breast on state occasions in the days of the Empire.

Monseigneur de Mazenod occasionally paid his respects to the Emperor Napoleon at the Tuileries, where he was always an esteemed guest. The Prince Imperial used to be present as a child on some of those occasions. Ah ! little did the Emperor or the holy Bishop then think that the sons of de Mazenod were destined one day to extend the shelter of their humble church, in the far distant African land, to the lifeless remains of Napoleon III's only son. Inscrutable are God's ways, but ever adorable. Before quitting Natal the devout Empress gave proofs of the interest she took in the work in which the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and the Sisters of the Holy Family were zealously engaged.

Bishop Jolivet lived and worked earnestly in the Natal Vicariate until 1903, when he passed away full of years and merits. His successor, Bishop Delalle, in an audience of the Pope at the beginning of 1913, mentioned, to his Holiness's great consolation, that ninety-seven priests and 750 nuns were engaged in a variety of good works in his vicariate. The Catholic Encyclopaedia gives the number of priests for 1910 as thirty-eight Oblates, seven secular priests, and forty-six priests of Mariannhill (lately Trappists). This last named community has also over 300 Brothers, and there are seven Marist Brothers, and five Oblate Lay Brothers. There are fifty-nine churches (that in Durban not being unworthy of the name of Cathedral), and forty-nine mission stations. There are twenty-four schools for white children, and seventy-two for others.

In Basutoland, now a Vicariate Apostolic under Bishop

Cenez, O.M.I., there were in 1909 about 8,900 Catholics and 700 Catechumens, and 1,200 children attending Catholic schools. There were thirty-four European Sisters of the Holy Family, and twelve native Nuns. The number of churches and mission stations was nineteen, of convents five, of schools nine. At a later date there were twenty-three Oblate Fathers, and five Brothers.

In Orangia, in its small towns there are very small congregations of Catholics, mostly Europeans. There are several convents, with high schools attached, which are much esteemed by Protestant parents. In Griqualand West, forming part of the same vicariate, there are nineteen priests, of whom sixteen are Oblates. At Kimberley, where the Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Gaughren, O.M.I., resides, there is a fine college conducted by the Irish Christian Brothers. There are several churches and convents and schools in the Diamond Fields. In Bechuanaland, which is also under the spiritual care of the Bishop at Kimberley, there is a native Mission at Taungs, founded in 1898 by Father Porte, O.M.I., and still directed by him. There are 400 native Catholics at Taungs, which is one of the places in Bishop Gaughren's vicariate where a community of nuns is an immense blessing in many ways. A catechism and prayer book have been composed by Father Porte in the language of the Bechuanas, which is akin to that of the Basutos.

The Transvaal was detached from the Natal Vicariate in 1886. Bishop Jolivet, O.M.I., had already at that time begun a church in Pretoria, where there were about 100 Catholics. Johannesburg hardly existed then. The present Catholic population of the Transvaal is said to be 9,500, including Europeans, natives, and Asiatics. There are fifteen Oblate Fathers in the country, and a few secular priests. The Marist Brothers have a fine college at Johannesburg. A community of Redemptorist Fathers was founded in Pretoria in 1912; and there are half a dozen Belgian Benedictines at work in the northern part of the Transvaal, which forms a separate Prefecture Apostolic since 1911.

From the German province of the Oblates (itself of only recent growth) a colony of missionaries went in 1896 to German South-west Africa (or Cimbebasia, the southern portion). In 1913 there are twenty-one Oblate Fathers, and twenty-four Brothers in twelve different mission stations in this Prefecture Apostolic.

From the Anglo-Irish province in 1894, some Fathers and Brothers, at the special request of the Right Rev. Dr. Gibney, Bishop of Perth, went out to Western Australia to serve Fremantle and some other mission stations, and to take charge of St. Kevin's Industrial School, Glendalough.

CHAPTER XXXII.

CONCLUSION.

IN the foregoing pages we have summarised, in so far as the limits of this volume permit, the various missionary works undertaken by the religious society of which Bishop de Mazenod is the father and founder. All our readers who feel a kindly interest in continuing their acquaintance with those works may keep in touch with them month by month by perusing *The Missionary Record of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate*.

The Founder himself lived to see, and to watch over, the beginnings of most of the missionary enterprises of which we have spoken. His own hands consecrated the first Bishops of his Congregation. Father Guibert in 1841 for Viviers (afterwards Archbishop of Tours and of Paris) ; Father Guigues in 1846 for Ottawa ; Father Taché in 1851 for St. Boniface ; Father Allard in 1851 for Natal ; Father Semeria in 1856 for Jaffna ; and in 1859 Father Grandin, the saintly apostle of the extreme north-west, for Saint Albert,—all these were consecrated Bishops by their own beloved Father and Superior General. Nearly every one was a pioneer, the maker of a new bishopric in a remote and new part of the world. Their consecrator was one who himself had a great personal share in their labours and their success.

Those who wish to consider that great prelate's own zeal for souls, his personal holiness in his career as missionary and as bishop, may study with religious gratification and profit Father Eugene Baffie's book concerning the " Inner Life and Virtues " of Bishop de Mazenod.

That holy prelate manifested a most devout and

penitential spirit from his youth upwards. Born in 1782, he was one of the exiles in the years of the French Revolution. When he was preparing for the priesthood in the early years of the nineteenth century, his own sentiments often expressed to his directors, and in those books of resolutions, and that story of his soul, which he wrote, by the wish of his confessor, may be learned sufficiently from what was written to himself by his intimate friend, the young Duke de Rohan: "How vast the field of work before us! How many evils to be uprooted, how much good seed to be planted! We need many a Borromeo, many a Vincent of Paul, many a Francis of Sales. Let us become Saints, and we shall work wonders."

Father Magi, a holy and aged Jesuit ("dispersed"), said to young de Mazenod: "Your vocation is as manifest as the midday sun. At the end of my career, I should rejoice at the thought of being replaced by so worthy a successor as yourself. St. Ignatius will obtain for you the grace to become an apostle. Your martyrdom will be that of self-immolation." When at length a priest in 1811, his spirit of faith, his ardour in God's service, his devotedness to the poor, the sorrowful, and the sinful knew no bounds. His life was perpetual toil in direct work for the salvation of souls, and in building up a society of working missionaries of the poor, and rebuilding a diocese which had been laid in ruins. From 1823 as Vicar General, from 1832 as Auxiliary Bishop, he was the *alter ego* of his aged uncle, the Bishop of Marseilles, whom he succeeded in 1837.

In 1854 Bishop de Mazenod spent some time in Rome, one of the Bishops to whom Pius IX. gave hospitality in the Quirinal, on the occasion of the definition of the Immaculate Conception. He received many marks of affectionate esteem from the Pope, who sent for him, and gave him an hour's audience, the morning after he reached Rome. The Bishop has left his own description of the great event of December 8, when the devotional ceremonies in St. Peter's began at seven o'clock in the morning. "The words of the solemn decree were pronounced by the Holy Father with deep emotion, whilst the tears rolled down his cheeks. I need not say that I shared in that emotion. It seemed

to me that heaven was open over our heads, and that the Church Triumphant was sharing in the transports of joy of the Church Militant. It seemed to me as if all the Saints must at that moment be raised to a higher degree of glory by a special act of Divine munificence, and as if Jesus Christ were offering Divine felicitations to His holy Mother, and St. Joseph, my special patron, were sharing largely in the glory of her to whom he was espoused on earth. I thought also that the Church Suffering in Purgatory must have been at that moment shone upon by a ray of divine light, suspending the sufferings of those detained therein. It seemed to me as if, by an act of sovereign clemency the sacred prison-house might have been emptied on that day, to allow the Holy Souls, that cherished portion of the family of the Heavenly Father, to take part in honouring their Mother and their Queen. It was with such sentiments in my breast that I took part in chanting the grand *Credo* of Nicaea, which followed in the Mass of that memorable day."

In his closing years, but whilst still hale and active, Mgr. de Mazenod drew out, as a final preparation, the thoughts which occupied him as his last will and testament. Very touching and edifying is this document in which the Bishop of Marseilles commends himself to God and all the heavenly court, and makes final appeals to his beloved priests and people. This kind of preparation for death, made in the vigour of life, is the most to be depended upon, and is that which gives most convincing proof of the sincerity of one's faith, and the fervour of one's disposition. Such is the mode of preparing for death, which has been ever in use among the saints and servants of God; therefore they are always ready when the day of their departure arrives, even if it comes suddenly.

The closing scene of the earthly pilgrimage of the saintly de Mazenod was like the setting of a summer's sun, it was so calm, so grand, so bright even to its last glimmer on the edge of life's horizon. Bodily pain he had to endure to intensity for several weeks, but his mind was all the while unclouded, and his play of holy thoughts and feelings, and his kindly word and look, were free and active as before. He would not allow his acute pains of body to prevent him

from discharging a single duty whilst he had strength to fulfil it. One night at nine o'clock he learnt that a letter had arrived from a distant foreign mission belonging to his society ; his attendants wished that the reading of it should be put off till the next day. " No," he said, " perhaps the good Father who has written to me is anxiously waiting for a reply, and expects a decision from me on some matter of importance." Sharper than any pain of body was the pang which he experienced in not being able to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The sense of this privation often drew copious tears from his eyes during his illness. The Altar of God had been for him, for many years, the sumptuous banquet table from which he daily partook of the Heavenly Bread, that hath in itself all manner of delights. The joy of offering the Holy Mass was the immense delectation of his sacerdotal life. The loss of this joy was the only suffering that drew words of complaint from his lips during his death illness. A slight improvement having taken place in his condition, a ray of hope of being able to say Mass dawned upon his mind. Rising from his sick bed, he had himself conducted one day to the altar in his oratory, where he stood for some moments to test his power of remaining erect. Alas ! the experiment proved to him the necessity of renouncing his cherished hope.

Unable any longer to recite the Divine Office, he desired one of the Fathers to read it aloud at his bedside. When those portions of the psalms and holy canticles to which he had greatest devotion were being read, he would raise his eyes to heaven or bow his head in earnest interior prayer. The strain of following thus the whole of the Divine Office became at last too much for him, and his physician had to restrict to Prime and Compline the portions of it which he would permit to be read to the holy invalid.

Letters at the time were coming from Canada, the Red River, Oregon, Texas, Natal, Ceylon, and other distant regions, where Oblate missionaries were pursuing their difficult but successful labours. Listening to the reading of these letters was the holy recreation of the venerable Bishop. When mention was made in these communications of conversions wrought, of signal graces imparted

through the ministry of his Fathers, he would bury himself for a few moments in an earnest prayer of thanksgiving, whilst his countenance would light up with a gleam of spiritual joy. On such occasions he would sometimes speak to the Fathers around his bed of the affairs of those distant missions, of the works of particular communities, and of the labours of individual Fathers, with a comprehensiveness and lucidity of view, and a mastery of detail, that astonished those who heard him. It then became evident how fully he had always been identifying himself as their wise, and vigilant, and loving Superior, with his Oblate missionaries in their labours in promoting the divine glory and the salvation of souls.

[The news of the Bishop's illness brought to the episcopal palace nearly all the Priests of Marseilles. For each one who knelt at his bedside to receive his blessing, he had the kindly word and smile, and of each he made some enquiry concerning his works of zeal, his successes or trials. Yet all the while the holy sufferer was doing battle with an agony of pain arising from a deep-seated and fatal abscess in the side. At last it was thought wise to administer to him the Holy Communion as Viaticum. Those who were witnesses of the last communion of that venerable Bishop declare that it was a sight to enrapture angels. His mastery over the sense of pain disclosed itself on that occasion. He did not allow his violent sufferings to become distractions to him, or to disturb him in the sublime act of giving reception in the sanctuary of his inner soul, for the last time on earth, to his Eucharistic Lord and King. Worship is perfect when exterior reverence is combined with interior love ; such was the character of the worship which the devout de Mazenod had always rendered to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. When he used to appear at the altar of his cathedral on some great solemnity, clad in pontifical robes, mitre on head and crozier in hand—the traits of his noble and beautiful and serene countenance, wearing the impress of deepest and most loving reverence—he seemed to be the realisation of those ideals of the sainted Pontiffs of olden times—the Augustines, and the Ambroses, and the Gregorys, which we sometimes, in thought, picture

to ourselves. It would be wrong to think that the solemnity of holy ceremonial was not chiefly designed and prescribed by the Church of Jesus Christ for the eyes of God and His Angels, and that their main end was to serve as a source of edification to worshippers of earth. These reflections are suggested by a characteristic display of Eucharistic piety on the part of Monseigneur de Mazenod, when lying upon his bed of death, and when he was on the point of receiving his last Communion. He ordered, on that occasion, his episcopal robes to be brought to his sick chamber. He vested himself—or rather the loving hands of others vested him—in cassock of richest purple, in alb of finest lace, in stole and chasuble of cloth of gold ; in such sacerdotal and episcopal garb he awaited the coming of his King and his God Incarnate, hidden under the veil of bread. Jesus knew on His arrival that all that array and preciousness of attire of His servant was for Himself alone—no crowd was there to witness or admire it. Ah ! He recognized that deed as belonging to the same order of loving reverence as the act of her who poured out upon His feet a full vessel of precious ointment.

Some faint hopes still lingered that the holy Bishop might yet recover ; at last these hopes vanished. His faithful friend and disciple of forty-six years' standing—his confessor, Father Tempier—informed the devout prelate that there was no longer any hope of his recovery. Receiving this news, he bowed his head in humble and joyful submission to the Divine will, and offered the sacrifice of his life, and of everything he possessed on earth, to his God. Thenceforward he wished to think and to speak only upon his approaching death. " My Lord," said one of the Fathers, approaching him, " we still have need of your presence in our midst ; pray to God to prolong your life. He will surely grant your request if you address this prayer to Him." " Oh no," replied the dying Bishop, " I will address no such prayer to my God ; my one desire is that His holy will be accomplished in my regard." He then requested that the prayers for the agonizing should be recited for him. " But give me first," he said, " the crucifix which I used to wear as a missionary, and my rosary beads."

Holding his missionary cross in one hand, and his rosary beads in the other, he awaited the coming of death. For the thirty hours which he was still to live, he did not part with these holy emblems. His crucifix, whilst keeping before his mind in his last hours the thought of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, also served to console him, by the holy memories of his missionary labours in behalf of perishing souls, which it awakened in his breast ; whilst the holding of his rosary beads in his dying hand was a profession of his deathless love and abiding confidence in the Queen of the Holy Rosary, Mary his Mother. After the prayers for the agonizing, which he followed with fervent attention, had been recited, he said, " I desire now to renew my religious vows." He recited then the formula of religious profession used in his society, with a fervour greater still than that which he experienced when he first pronounced the vows of the religious state.

A letter arrived about this time, addressed to him by a Father in one of the foreign missions of his society. Being informed of the fact, he asked whether the letter was on subjects of piety or on matters of business ; learning that it was of the latter nature, he said, " Then it does not concern me, my only business now is to prepare for a good death." " My Lord," said one of the Fathers, " in what terms shall we speak of your last moments to our brethren who are absent ? " " Tell them," he replied, " that I die in peace—that I die consoled by the thought that God has condescended to use me as an instrument in founding, in His Church, the Society of the Oblates." " My Lord," continued his interlocutor, " confer on us the favour of disclosing to us the chief wish of your heart in our regard." Then the dying servant of God, fixing a glance of paternal tenderness on the Oblate Fathers who were at his bedside, said, " The chief wish of my heart in your regard is that you practise with fidelity, charity—charity—charity towards one another, and that in your exterior works you exercise zeal for the salvation of souls." He received with faith and piety the Apostolic Benediction which was forwarded to him by the Holy Father, Pius IX.

At intervals, loving aspirations expressive of his desire

to die, and to become united for ever to God, broke from his lips, after uttering which he used to sink into silent prayer. Feeling that his end was at hand, he invited Father Tempier to recite again the prayers for the dying. In the room at the time were his nephew, the Marquis of Boisgelin ; his Auxiliary Bishop, Mgr. Jeancard ; his Vicars-General ; the Assistants-General, and other Oblate Fathers ; two Sisters of Hope, and the servants of his household. They came to witness the death of a great servant of God. At his desire the Compline service, to which he had much devotion, was chanted in his chamber. At those parts of that beautiful service that seemed most appropriate to his condition—such as the versicle, *Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit* ; and the canticle, *Now dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, in peace*—he would lift his hands and eyes to heaven in union with the sentiment uttered in these prayers. After Compline, the “Salve Regina,” a prayer to which he was also very devout, was recited. At the words of the prayer, “after this our exile ended,” he raised his eyes to heaven, and at each of the invocations, “O clement,” “O loving,” he gave signs that he was following the words that were being recited. At the invocation, “O sweet Virgin Mary,” he breathed his soul into the hands of his God. He died on the 21st of May 1861, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

To the lives of the great servants of God, the words of the text, *Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos*—“By their fruits you shall know them”—are applicable in the fulness of their meaning. Extraordinary virtue is in itself deeply hidden ; its abiding-places lie in the centre of souls, in the depths of hearts, in the secrecy of consciences, in the untold thoughts of enlightened and holy minds. Sometimes an exterior but an involuntary defectiveness in manner, way or word, is a screen which God’s own hand employs to veil the preciousness of the sanctity of His earthly saints from the sun-glare of human notice, whose rays falling upon it might tarnish or destroy its lustre. And those who see only the screen and discover not the treasure hidden beneath it, pass along either ignoring or censuring a worth which they neither comprehend nor behold. The life of

Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod, judged by its fruits, is one that merits to take its place in the annals of the history of the Church, side by side with the lives of the most illustrious prelates of ancient or of modern days, and also with those of the patriarchs of the Religious state—the Founders of Orders or Institutes to which the Church has affixed the seal of her approbation.

It is not mere filial devotion which makes us look upon Monseigneur de Mazenod as one of the great Bishops of the Church. Though he was a lover of silence and the shade, his brethren in the episcopate—the best judges—knew and proclaimed his worth. As witnesses to his stately dignity, and piety, and wisdom, and apostolic zeal, we might quote his successors in the see of Marseilles (one of them known best as Cardinal Place), or Cardinal Giraud, Archbishop of Cambrai, or again Archbishop Dixon, the Irish Primate, or Dr. James Walshe, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, who stayed in Marseilles on his way back from his first visit *ad limina Apostolorum*. It will be enough to repeat here the words of two French Bishops, themselves of high distinction in the Church, in the nineteenth century. Mgr. Berteaud, Bishop of Tulle, returning home one day said to his priests, “I have been to Marseilles: I have visited Paul.” In 1864, when Father Joseph Fabre, the second Superior General of the Oblates, was conversing with Mgr. Dupanloup in reference to Notre Dame de Clery, a sanctuary served by the Oblates, the Bishop of Orleans said he hoped the Life of Mgr de Mazenod would be written soon: “il avait le génie de l’épiscopat,” he said; “il a été un des plus grands évêques de notre époque.”

DATE DUE

NOV 21 1961
NOV 15 1961

NOV 15 1961

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

M BX4705.M476 C6

Sketches of the life of Mgr. De Mazenod



33525001350211

DISCARD

